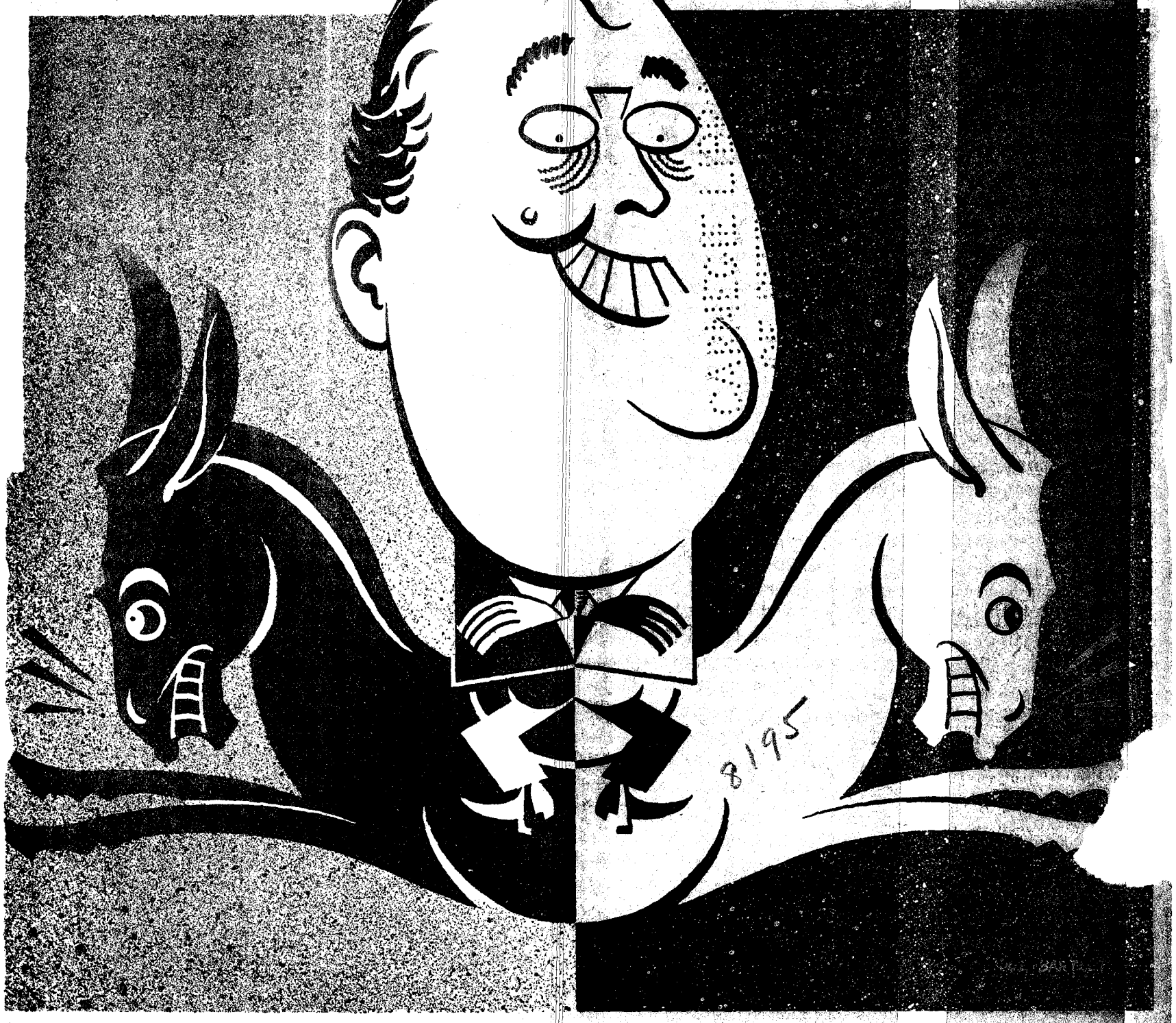
Great Britain Turns to G... M...

NEW MASSES

JUNE 29, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS



Is the Democratic Party Splitting?

by MARGUERITE YOUNG

Tom M. Girdler, the Wolf of Steel by Lou Par...w

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You [illegible] of our cover [illegible] MASSES on page 11 of this issue.

BETWEEN OURSELVES

The little saga of the correspondence involving the bluejackets of the Spanish fleet, Joan Crawford, and ourselves continues. The present chapter is a letter to us from the Spanish sailors, in answer to our original acknowledgment of their letter sent via us to Miss Crawford. Written from the Cartagena naval base by Geoffrey N. Marshall, it follows in part:

Dear Comrades: Your letter to José Perez about the letter and cap ribbon we asked you to send to Joan Crawford has been handed to me. Probably because you ask these boys to tell you something about themselves and their work and they are not very good at that particular job. So I will tell you a little about them after I have thanked you for attending to the letter for Joan.

Now a few words about the fleet—and this unfortunately makes it necessary for me to introduce myself. Nationality: by accident of birth, British. Occupation: at present, naval officer. Rank: lieutenant-commander. Joined republican fleet November, 1936. Previously lived in China, Japan, Canada, and California. Deported from U.S.A. 1933. (Verify through Los Angeles "Red Squad.") Assigned to destroyer *Alcala Galiano:* 1800 tons, 40,000 h.p., 38 knots. Inspection: boilers, turbines, guns, and torpedo gear in first-class shape. Discipline: sufficient for practical purposes. Efficiency of personnel: far beyond expectations; terrific appetite for knowledge. Enthusiasm: for ceremony, none; for fighting, more zest than a ball team. Habits: perhaps overinclined to attend to personal appearance (handsome Spaniards sure is right, and maybe I'm a bit jealous); good teeth, good eyes, lean, sensitive, humorous, tolerant, generous.

I go ashore to the Marine Club to play billiards with a young signalman. He is an artist at the game and leaves me far astern. I get suspicious and find he is cheating. He is adding to my score instead of his because he wants me to enjoy the game. He continues to play fairly well but apparently it is much more important that I enjoy the game than that he win it. ("Backward people," you know.) We go to a [illegible] for a drink. The ship's cook does [illegible] invite us to have one with him. [illegible]rely orders it and there it is in front of us. Real tough guy, this cook. [illegible] you about him. About twenty-eight. Rather a dandy and dances well. He shot the previous captain of this ship on July 19, 1936. Why? He and a good many more had the low-down on the scheme of the captain and some of the officers to hand the ship and her crew over to the fascists. He told his vocational next of kin, the officer's pantry boy, to "stop, look, and listen." On receiving word that the captain and officers were in deep conclave, the cook went to the refrigerator at the top of the officers' companionway (he was only looking for "meat" and had a chopper in his hand). The pantry boy and cook both saw the captain and officers drinking Franco's health and heard the former tell them to put automatics in their belts and to follow him to the quarter-deck and there to act as "officers and gentlemen." The cook closed the ice box, laid down his chopper, and reached for a rifle from a rack. (Perhaps it was not strange that one of them was loaded and he knew which.) The captain was halfway up the ladder when the cook fired. You can see the dent where the bullet struck after it passed through his arm. The next moment found the captain lying at the foot of the ladder and the officers barricading themselves in their dining room. The cook explains that he has heard of traitors who have been repaired in hospitals. When he had finished with his chopper the captain was beyond all repair. Meanwhile in another cabin the second-in-command was feigning to be asleep when requested by a boy with a fixed bayonet to "arise and walk." He pretended he was reaching for his shoes, but he had concealed an automatic in one of them. Well, they could not repair him either—even if they had tried. And so, in just a few minutes, another modern and fast destroyer was secured by the republicans (from where this is written I can see the cook cutting up a side of beef with his chopper).

And then just for instance, there is gun-layer Pedro. Let me tell you about him. Ashore one evening Pedro was obviously not sober. This at present is not done. So his pals get round him and in a little while one comes over to explain that Pedro's family is in Málaga and that because he and his two brothers are with the republican forces his mother and sister have been killed. Pedro has been stilling the pain with alcohol and now he is singing. Next night at sea he is on watch at his gun and he is again singing. My Spanish is not perfect, but it needed no knowledge of any language to sense the pain under that singing.

[*The second half of this letter will be published on this page next week.*—EDITORS.]

Who's Who

MARGUERITE YOUNG is a veteran political reporter and commentator, having covered Washington, D. C., for the New York *World-Telegram* and other papers, following which she became Washington correspondent of the *Daily Worker*. She was formerly an editor of this magazine, and has written numerous articles for us on politics and on the early stages of the C.I.O. organization drive in steel. Miss Young is now at work on a book which will tell the story of her ten years' work in the nation's capital. . . . Ivor Montagu is the Geneva correspondent of the British *Daily Worker*. . . . Mark Graubard is [illegible] who has contributed to ou[illegible]s before. He is the author [illegible] work on gene[illegible] is the proprietor [illegible] lishing firm of [illegible] head of the Left Book Club in England. . . . Henry Hart has had extensive experience in commercial publishing, having been editor at both Putnam's and Scribner's. His article in this issue is based upon his address at the recent writers' congress. . . . Lou Partnow is a young writer who makes his NEW MASSES debut in this issue. . . . Harry Slochower is the author of *Three Ways of Modern Man,* just published by International. . . . Grace Hutchins is a member of the staff of the Labor Research Association and is the author of *Women Who Work* as well as of a number of pamphlets. . . . Granville Hicks was formerly literary editor of the NEW MASSES. He is the author of *The Great Tradition,* a Marxist historical study of American letters. He is at present working on a similar study of British literature. . . . Martha Thomas is on the editorial board of an Illinois labor paper.

What's What

PURCHASERS of tickets for *The Cradle Will Rock,* NEW MASSES benefit scheduled for the night of June 19, can return their tickets for a cash refund at our office.

Artist Georges Schreiber has asked us to sell the originals of his ten caricatures of personalities at the recent writers' congress for the joint benefit of the NEW MASSES and the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion. The caricatures were reproduced in the NEW MASSES of June 18. The price is $100, and they will be sent at once to the remitter of the first check for that amount.

Editor Joseph Freeman and Business Manager George Willner have left on a flying trip to the Pacific Coast. Friends can get in touch with them at 224 South Spring St., Los Angeles, Room 506.

Flashbacks

"NONE of the defendants could be at all connected with the case. Wholesale bribery and intimidation of witnesses were resorted to. The defendants were not proven guilty of the crime charged under the indictment," said Governor John P. Altgeld of Illinois, June 26, 1893, when he pardoned labor leaders Fielden, Neebe, and Schwab, who had been sentenced for life in connection with the Haymarket affair. . . . The great Pullman strike, led by Eugene V. Debs, began June 26, 1894, also in Illinois. . . . C.I.O.'ers look back this week to the call for industrial unionism which rallied the militant I.W.W. movements thirty-two years ago: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life." Thus ran the preamble to the constitution of the Industrial Workers of the World, which was formed at Chicago, June 27, 1905. . . . Twenty years later on the same day and in the same city was founded the American branch of the International Labor Defense.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification [illegible] direct to us rather than to t[illegible] office will give the best results.

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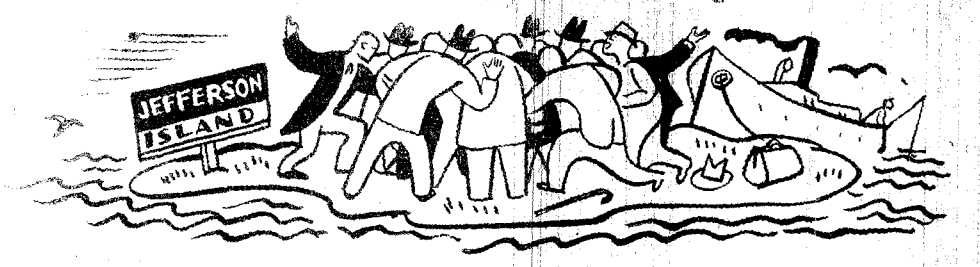

William Sanderson

Is the Democratic Party Splitting?

The Jefferson Island pow-wow is held to signalize the threat of a serious cleavage

By Marguerite Young

A RECENT dispatch from Washington discussed President Roosevelt's scheduled series of quiet chats on Jefferson Island in Chesapeake Bay with Democratic members of Congress—a big friendly stag party with only senators and representatives there to make up with their chief.

It seems that there have been ominous signs of disaffection among Democrats on Capitol Hill and even an undercurrent of personal resentment against the President. He was urged to summon groups and individuals to the White House and to win them over with conciliatory gestures, but failed to do so. As a result, the story goes, there were eruptions on the Democratic side of the House floor, which came near wrecking the President's relief program and tax-evasion inquiry, and in the Senate a disaffection which produced the Judiciary Committee's adverse report on the bill to reform the Supreme Court. Then, the dispatch continues, Representative Maury Maverick of Texas, as staunch a New Dealer as ever backed the President, spoke some blunt words from the floor of the House. He said he was "getting sick and tired of having things thrown at us without the courtesy of an advance word"; unless the White House was more coöperative it might as well expect trouble in Congress. Apparently the President took these remarks to heart, and therefore arranged for the stag party of Democratic congressmen at Jefferson Island. The party was scheduled to begin on June 24 and run three days, giving the boys a chance to take up their problems with Mr. Roosevelt.

Where there's smoke, there's fire, and you may be sure that behind the Jefferson Island get-together are some important political developments. The Republicans, who are still trying to recover from the terrific whacking they got last November, are crowing in the press that Roosevelt cannot control his own party on the Supreme Court issue. Significant in this connection were the reports that certain Democratic senators would not attend the Jefferson Island stag. Senator Wheeler, who led the fight against the Supreme Court reform, said he would attend if invited provided he had no speaking engagement, and Senator Copeland, another anti-administration Democrat, announced that he had other engagements.

Meanwhile, it is reported that the administration intends to discipline hostile senators whose terms expire in 1938. Senator Van Nuys of Indiana, who fought the Supreme Court reform and attacked other administration measures, has been notified that he will not be renominated.

THERE IS OBVIOUSLY a rift in Democratic ranks, but it is connected with something far more significant than personal relations with the President. Several weeks ago I sat in the press galleries of House and Senate and saw certain important symptoms of change in the major political parties. Official party alignments are being abandoned, and congressmen frankly reveal themselves as progressives or reactionaries, regardless of party labels.

Take as an example the fight over the relief bill. Here was a measure sent to Congress by the Democratic President, yet the chairman of the House Rules Committee, a red-haired Democratic captain of the administration's traditional machine, voted against it. Reactionary agitation against the bill was carried on by certain Democrats in league with certain Republicans; the defense of the bill was carried on by Farmer-Laborites and by progressives in both major parties. When the measure was finally put through, you heard young Democratic congressmen say: "Maybe this will show the President that our southern bourbon congressional leaders never were on the side of the people."

After observing this scene, I had a long conversation with an administration senator. He thought aloud and with some satisfaction of a Democratic Party minus its southern bourbons entering into working agreements with local farmer-labor and other regional progressive groupings. This senator pointed to the morning's newspaper and said:

"Look at the success of the C.I.O. I never get away from it. Every headline is a C.I.O. victory, and the tories are always shoving these victories under our noses. But you cannot witness that progress or the progress of independent political groups and still expect people to vote a mere party label."

Another politician spoke of the mayoralty campaign in New York; he thought La Guardia would be reëlected in a fight which would enhance the national meaning of the American Labor Party and trounce the Tammany sachems. The topic bobbed up in many talks I had in Washington, and everywhere I found a surprising awareness that general Democratic strategy could not be separated from such strategic local situations as New York's mayoralty race. One Democratic politician felt that the Democratic Party could be preserved nationally only at the expense of those Tammany and southern bourbon leaderships which hitherto had been its base.

True, such opinions come chiefly from a special type of New Dealer. He is as a rule youthful, liberal, and vaguely anti-fascist, and so cursed with confusion and timidity that he has done nothing to forestall the administration's rightward turn on such key questions as policy toward the unemployed and the Spanish war. One such congressman actually welcomed the relief bill's close shave in the House. It was evident even then that the tory coalition of Republicans and Democrats had only made a strategic retreat; it counted on renewing the offensive in the Senate. But the young congressman argued: "Let the reactionary leaders pop the President; they'll do it once too often and he'll wake up and reorganize his leadership on Capitol Hill."

Reactions from this type of Democrat need to be discounted. He usually has a strong

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wish to prevent an open fascist victory over civil rights and the trade unions. But there is something else he wants, too. He wants to forestall a national progressive farmer-labor party in 1940. Naturally he tends to overestimate the victories, present and potential, of liberal and progressive forces within the Democratic Party.

Together with this we must remember the hard truth that as yet the C.I.O. has not begun to advance farmer-labor political consciousness, and its Labor's Non-Partisan League has marshaled no decisive mass action on immediately vital administration measures such as the Supreme Court reform.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has described his own political position as "a little left of center." In Washington you notice an accumulation of disaffection among Democrats to the left as well as to the right of that position. Some complain that the President has fumbled the ball on the Supreme Court; if he had not let his congressional leaders dawdle along, the reform would be law by now. A leading New Dealers, a senator from the West, said to me: "From the very beginning I told the President we ought to cut loose from those reactionaries. He was always going to manage them. Sometimes, of course, he did; and, as you know, I defended him even when he couldn't. But now? . . ." He shrugged his shoulders, disgruntled and undecided.

These remarks are a key to one of the most important factors in the present situation within the Democratic Party. Until now, the Democrats to the left of the President and those substantially in line with him have done nothing but complain even when facing an offensive from the reactionaries. There have, of course, been exceptional cases, those occasions when Farmer-Laborites and progressives and rare isolated Democrats have taken the lead in the fight for reform measures. To the right of the President, the mode of speech in Congress has been the loudest of all: organized action. That is one of the reasons why the extreme reactionaries have been able to make a bigger dent in the press and in the President's program than their numbers warrant.

These trends were evident as you sat in the House press gallery watching the relief debate. The vast pale chamber, with light filtering subdued through the ceiling's opaque glass, is scientifically air-cooled, yet the congressmen showed the withering effects of Washington's June heat. If you took in the people on the well-filled floor, you got the impression of a gray, exhausted mass—and that mass was concentrated on the side of the big Democratic majority, to the right of the center aisle as you look down upon the floor. There were spots of intense activity on that side; the debate raged chiefly from there. In the center of it were a trio of Democratic diehards; Beiter of New York, Starnes of Alabama, and Fuller of Arkansas. There you had the deep south of the landlord and industrialist. Fuller is a notorious jingo; Starnes, of the committee on immigration, is known for reactionary drives against the foreign born. Now battling against the relief bill, these three men were shouting and gesticulating wildly. In their own vernacular, they were fit to be tied.

Opposite sat the comparatively small group of Republicans. The opposition has eighty-nine members, and most of them were present. Here also was Jerry Boileau quietly conferring with his Wisconsin Progressive and Minnesota Farmer-Labor colleagues. By chance Maury Maverick, Democrat of Texas, sits nearby also at the moment. Several days earlier, Boileau had advanced the $3,000,000,000 relief bill of the Workers' Alliance making a characteristically solid, firmly delivered speech in its favor. Maverick, pressing his own $2,000,000,000 measure, had given a fiery reply to attacks which the reactionaries had hurled at Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins. Most of the Republicans sat calmly by. Their foxy stalwarts, like Leader Snell, smiled; they all but licked their chops to see their work being done for them by the right wing of the Democrats.

That was the whole point of it. The huge Democratic majority was dividing ranks on a vital issue. The Right was carrying the ball for the Republicans in a line smash against the basic policy of federal responsibility for the unemployed. The Left was lined up behind the Farmer-Labor-progressive bloc in a counter-drive. The center, an impotent aggregation, turned in bewilderment from Maverick to Fuller to the official Democratic leader, Sam Rayburn of Texas.

Rayburn was a curious figure as he stood with shiny pate bowed and his hands braced on two tables. He wasn't fighting for the President's program; he was almost apologizing for it. Several of his fellow-Democrats later remarked that he looked as if he might be happier on the other side of the aisle. And why not? During the Hoover years Rayburn was an old crony of Jack Garner, then Democratic leader, now Vice-President and chief of the whole southern bourbon phalanx in Congress. In the Hoover years, Rayburn was also a crony of Republican Speaker Nicholas Longworth. He is not the only Democrat with such a record. In this House you will see plenty of Democrats who in the Hoover years were publicly as well as privately aligned with the Republican reactionaries.

The President's leadership on Capitol Hill has that background; in the House, Rayburn of the bourbon South and O'Connor of Tam-

A. Ajay

"I got that one with an injunction."

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many; in the Senate Jack Garner of Texas, Pat Harrison of Mississippi, and Joe Robinson of Arkansas. To appreciate this line-up, we must remember that Joe Robinson is a corporation lawyer and an associate of the public utilities magnate Harvey Couch, and that Garner is a banker and landowner on his own account. These men are identified with both landlordship and finance; they represent the top stratum of that latter-day Dixie which is owned basically by insurance companies and bankers, financial combines often directly or indirectly linked to eastern finance. There is also the textile industry of the South represented in the Senate by James Byrnes, Democrat of South Carolina, who authored the bill against the sit-downs. This is the "conservative southern" wing described in the newspapers, a wing which has all the social backwardness of the ruling group of a recently industrialized area.

I was discussing these things with my neighbor in the House press gallery. This correspondent, a native southerner who has just returned from a tour of the South for his paper, thought that local politicians there as well as the working and middle classes were still and would continue to be consciously opposed to any recognizable reaction and in favor of reform. This helps to explain why the southern bourbons on Capitol Hill went along with Roosevelt even after the majority of the dominant capitalists soured on the New Deal and opened their frontal attack. But they have changed their tune since the introduction of the utilities-regulation bill. At that time Rayburn himself came around to the White House position only after severe pressure. Now the Democratic right wing is visibly sabotaging the administration program. I think they will avoid any open breach for a long time; their present inner-party tactic boils down to bluffing and bulldozing. They exploit their control, acquired through seniority, of vital committee chairmanships, and they have been aided by the disorganization and confusion of their liberal opponents in Congress. In short, the reactionaries have taken the offensive in Washington despite their overwhelming defeat in the field in the November elections.

Chodorov

Basque Landscape

As SHREWD a politician as President Roosevelt cannot fail to see the implications of the rift in his ranks. That rift was plainly visible at the Democratic National Convention last year in Philadelphia. On that packed, hot, convention floor there were high walls between the various Democratic contingents. These included such diverse political elements as the pro-fascist, pro-Hearst, Italian publisher Generoso Pope; spokesmen of the southern reaction; representatives of Tammany and the lesser machines of Frank Hague in New Jersey and Pendergast in Missouri; a small liberal faction which contained a former Socialist mayor; men from the state of Washington's Commonwealth Federation where the masses had fought to capture the Democratic machinery. And there was that broad middle section of America represented by delegates looking like so many copies of Mr. Deeds come to town and speaking for left-moving voters still unprepared for anything beyond following the President. It was this situation, plus pressure of the new C.I.O. forces from outside the convention hall, that resulted in the Democratic platform gesture on the Supreme Court issue. After November, a liberal mobilization in Washington hastened Roosevelt's submission of his plan to execute Court reform. This, in turn, favorably affected the C.I.O. drive.

Democratic strategists will not and progressive voters cannot afford to miss the explosive portent of the schisms, significantly widespread within the Democratic Party. There is, for instance, the right wing in Nebraska, which bitterly fought Senator Norris despite his backing by the administration. This sort of thing is continuously reflected in Washington. Here you have a Democratic senator from Hague's New Jersey publicly castigating the National Manufacturers' Association. Here the renegade-liberal Democratic Senator Wheeler of Montana leads the fight to keep the Supreme Court packed. And simultaneously a progressive Democratic congressman like Jerry O'Connell of Montana organizes a group of his colleagues to put pressure on the administration to reverse its un-neutral policy toward loyalist Spain.

President Roosevelt will not be able to reconcile permanently the warring forces within the Democratic Party, however useful the Jefferson Island stag may be in other respects. Progress and reaction will not lie down in the same fold like the lion and the lamb of the prophet's dream. The process in the Democratic Party is one which will eventually destroy the traditional two-party system in this country. The greater the pressure of liberal mass sentiment, the less can the Democratic Party be merely Tweedledee to the Republican Tweedledum. Its reactionary wing may fuse with the Republican tories; its left wing will in all likelihood be strongly affected by organized labor's upsurge.

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The Lion Bares Its Claws

Britain, seeking an alliance with the Nazi government, is seen preparing to jockey Mussolini out of Spain for her own advantage

By Ivor Montagu

THE position of the powers today in respect to Spain is best illustrated by the recent League Council meeting which ealt with the Spanish government's reminder o the League of Nations of "increasing acts f aggression."

It was the aim of the British delegation at ıe League Council meeting to see to it that ne matter was not dealt with by the League nd was completely referred back to the "Non-ntervention Committee." A subsidiary aim f the British delegates was to get the League ɔ give its full blessing to the Non-Interven-'on Committee and all Foreign Minister An-ıony Eden's works. In the first aim it suc-eeded 99 percent. In the second—very im-ɔrtant to it for quieting League and demo-ratic opinion at home—it was less successful.

It should be understood that the Council ɔf the League is much more easy to rig than he Assembly. At the Assembly, where de-isions are by majority vote, with fifty or more ıations present, someone is always in a position ɔ make a row. At the Council, resolutions nust be unanimous, and the strength of Eden's position is that he can rely absolutely ɔn most of the members.

On the other hand, not only for interna-ɔnal but for political reasons at home, the panish government's position would be tre-ıendously weakened if it got no decision at all ɔut of the Council, which would result if the vote were not unanimous. Valencia's position would be weakened internationally if it stood solated with only Soviet support. Conse-quently, Eden holds a whip hand to get his own plans through. The vigor with which ither Spain or the U.S.S.R. can act depends argely on France, Sweden, and New Zealand.

Representing France is Delbos, a Radical Socialist and among the most reactionary of ıis party, which threatens to split the popular ront the moment anyone suggests doing any-thing about Spain that Eden does not like. This time he swung a fair deal. In return for backing up Eden in referring everything to the Non-Intervention Committee, Delbos got Eden's leave at last to assure the Austrian foreign minister and Czechoslovakia of France's "interest in their independence" and ɔ attend a demonstrative, almost anti-Rome-Berlin dinner, thrown by the Czechoslovaks to ıe Little Entente, the Balkan Entente, Litvi-ov, and himself.

Sweden and New Zealand put up a strong ıow against Eden at the previous Council ıeeting on the plot to turn down Ethiopian redentials. But this time Sweden was safe. The new "Oslo Confederation" of "northern

Gerry

Anthony Eden

neutrals" has just been formed, and economic concessions from Britain are terribly important.

New Zealand was Eden's danger. As a matter of fact, the New Zealand delegation had prepared a resolution and speech blowing Eden's whole scheme wide open by pointing out that aggression against Spain had taken place, that the Committee was a flop, and that the League must do something about it.

To give the devil his due, Eden's effrontery in this situation was amazing. In open Council, he stepped across to the place of New Zealand's delegate, Jordan, picked up his draft, read it, and blue-penciled it heavily, leaving poor Jordan, who is elderly and not very fierce, with nothing but a few disconnected paragraphs to burble through, and no courage —on the spur of the moment—to stand out against him.

So much for the forces maneuvering behind the resolution to refer Spain's protest. The most notable thing about the whole affair, however, was Eden's attitude throughout, which is decisive for the Spanish situation today.

Let us remember the circumstances in which the League Council was meeting. The Spanish government was laying before the Council documents, the authenticity of which no one disputes, absolutely proving—with a standard of proof sufficient to hang a man many times over—the presence in Spain of an Italian expeditionary army. Far from being volunteers, these people, some of whom are proved to be mobilized conscripts, were fitted out by the Italian government, and are led and maintained by the Italian government, which maintains for them on Spanish soil such services as branches of the Royal and Imperial Italian mail.

Del Vayo's speech put the League right on the spot. If it did not do anything now, in what case would it ever? He didn't ask for anything, he just reported a state of affairs; let the Council decide. (His speech is a model, as good as anything the Ethiopian emperor ever did. It deserves to be studied.)

But everybody had made up their minds. Except Litvinov, of course, whose speech was also first-rate and should be read, and Jordan, they were all going to do what Eden wanted.

And all except Eden did it in the right way, the face-saving way that they had learned from the British style of betrayal. "Situation under Article 10 . . .," "League must deal with . . .," "better refer to Non-Intervention Committee, only to prevent two international bodies working on the same problem," etc., etc.

But no such speech as Eden's has ever been heard before from a British delegate. Nor from anyone at the League save a German or Italian. The Japanese were always soft-spoken. Arrogant, rude (he looked at the ceiling and yawned while Del Vayo was referring to the destruction of Guernica), take-it-or-leave-it. Not one word from start to finish about the Covenant, or anybody's international obligations as member of the League, or anything else. Just: "we have decided . . .," "we have done . . .," "it is therefore desirable for the Council to . . .," and so forth. With Del Vayo sitting beside him as a fellow-Council-member, living proof that for members of the League, at least, he represented Spain, Eden, alone among the orators, referred constantly to "the two sides." Here was the first sample of the new, rearmed British empire, the reinforced strength that was "to enable it to play its part in collective security."

Eden got his referral of the Spanish protest to the Non-Intervention Committee, but he didn't get the praise for its good work which stood in the original British draft. That was too much even for the most venal delegates to swallow, so the final draft contains "regrets" that the Committee has not "yet" been successful. The final draft also contains, despite Eden's fight against it, a reference to the duties of the members of the League in respect to "non-intervention."

WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION of all this? Why was Eden so keen to get the matter referred back to the committee? For one reason: *the British government is on the verge of an agreement with Nazi Germany.* Up to January the Foreign Office tried to detach

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Rome from Berlin. Now it is trying to detach Berlin from Rome.

In January, at the time of the famous "gentlemen's agreement," Britain knew perfectly what Mussolini was doing in Spain. It is an insult to the adult intelligence to suppose the British secret service did not inform Eden about the preparation of expeditionary forces on such a scale.

Since then, however, Britain and Italy's paths have parted. If Italy is to win for Franco (which was Eden's first bright idea), she can do so only by intervention amounting to a complete occupation of the country, and it would be hell's bells trying to get her out.

Checking Italy through League measures about "invasion" and "violation of Spanish integrity" would mean the end of intervention and the immediate victory of the republic. This is not what Eden wants.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE LINE (and it has been voiced openly by Churchill) is "mediation," and the "restoration of calm by temporary rule of trusted non-politicians" (i. e., elimination of the democratically elected leaders of the Spanish people), whereupon the Spanish people "will be grateful to those who interfered the least" (i. e., will be subjected to exploitation by Britain instead of Italy).

In the Non-Intervention Committee, bound by no awkward Covenant rules, the British government expects to edge out Mussolini (and perhaps Franco personally, for appearance's sake) by non-intervention, and then use "mediation," not only as the supreme weapon to rob the republic of its coming victory, but as the excuse "impartially" to grab the exploitation of Spain from under Mussolini's nose. The idea is that Germany will be just as glad to share a few concessions with Britain as with Mussolini.

The British empire, rearmed, unsheathes its claws and prepares to grab the booty fought for by deluded fascist "volunteers."

It is to this end that the Anglo-German pact is being devised. Eden and Ribbentrop have talked secretly for months. Indiscreetly, the former admitted in a Geneva conversation that the pact had been almost completed with Blomberg, when that Royal-Duchess-surrounded worthy was in London for the coronation. To gain it, London is behaving as though a London-Berlin axis were already in being. This could be seen in operation in Eden's pointed and obvious refusal to follow Delbos in speaking of a general European settlement including the east being essential to a western Locarno, in what should have been the merely formal League occasion of registering the Anglo-French-Belgian accord. It can be seen in the frantic Foreign Office clamp on newspaper expression of British indignation over the Almeria barbarism. It can be seen in the British proposal involving use of the navy for "close collaboration" with Germany and Italy in future, without condemning and preventing "reprisals."

The Foreign Office press department is even starting to peddle Goebbels's lies to the British press, such as the preposterous nonsense about Russians bombing the *Deutschland*. And London is mixing in internal German politics by backing Schacht against the non-Schacht Nazis in a situation that almost duplicates the tension before the "blood purge" of June 30, 1934.

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES to the plan of the British lion, its back turned on the League, striding out on the field of power politics?

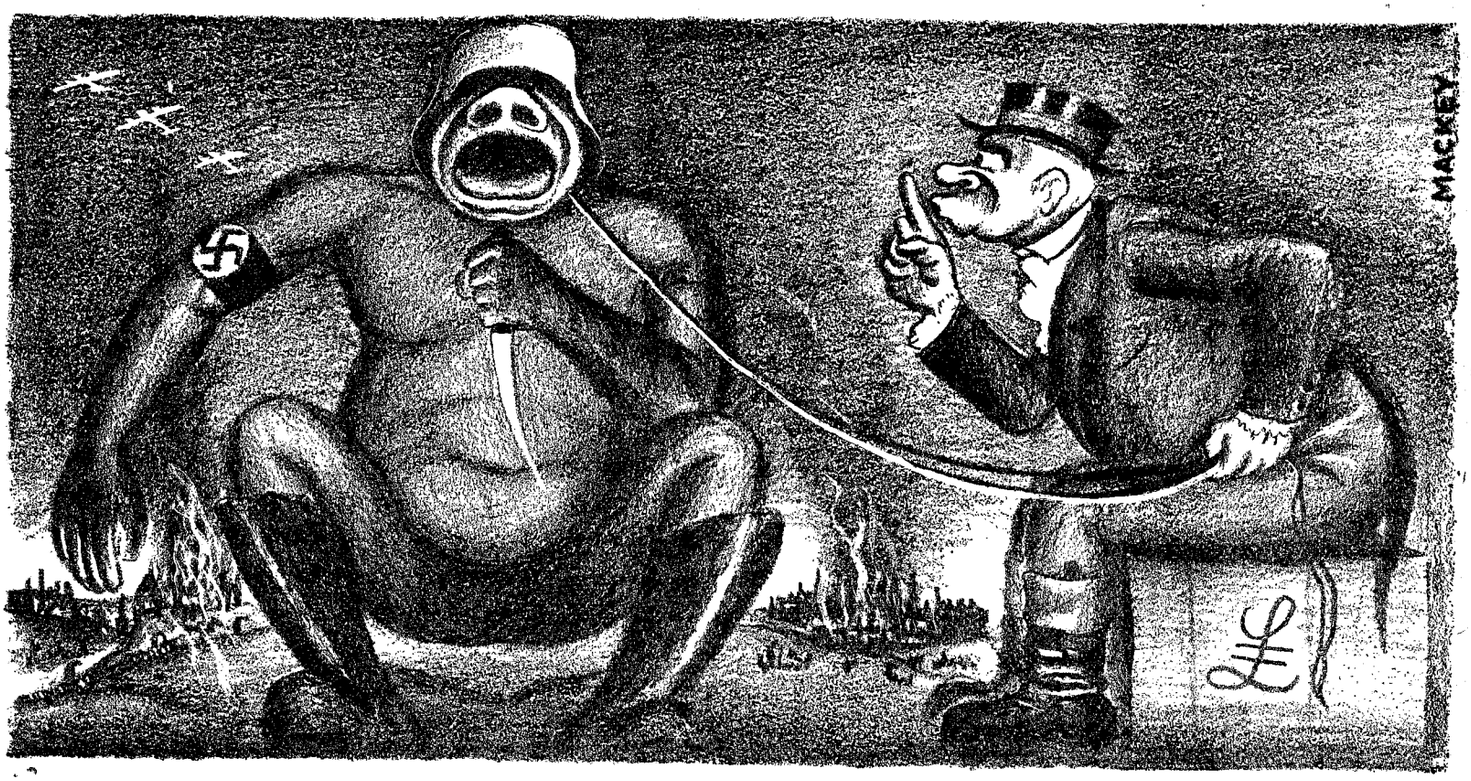
They are three. First, Mussolini and the non-Schacht Nazis will not give in without a struggle. Almeria and the joint Italo-German withdrawal from non-intervention control were their answer to the British efforts to detach Hitler, their endeavor to commit Germany so deeply that she cannot rat to Eden. The bombardment of the Spanish coast, or a similar act promoted by these elements, was certain and inevitable the moment Eden showed himself ready to stop the League from dealing with such a flagrant violation of integrity as the Italian land invasion.

Second, the increasing might of the Spanish people may achieve a victory so decisive that its conquest will be possible only by open intervention on the Mussolini scale, a scale so large that the masses following liberalism and the Second International must revolt at its toleration by their leaders.

Third, will the masses move? Eden and the new Chamberlain government think themselves strong. They think the Labor masses are tied safe to their tail, and that they have only to shout to the liberals: "There's a crisis; say nothing or you'll endanger peace" to make them stand anything.

But Guernica shook the Foreign Office. It postponed the Anglo-German accord for several weeks. Eden and the Chamberlain government may overestimate their strength. Unity may be forged—unity of all who, in the Spanish question, will not see willingly the betrayal of brotherhood and the hope of international law.

A few more Guernicas and Almerias, and a bit of Eden's latest Geneva manners at home, may make a big difference in Britain.



John Mackey

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UNDER THIS BANNER

Scott Johnston

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

The Right to Kill

WITH characteristic chicanery, heads of the four steel companies whose 100,000 employees are on strike have decided to hamstring the three-man mediation board appointed by Secretary Perkins. Grace, Girdler, and Purnell are willing to discuss matters with Messrs. Taft, Garrison, and McGrady, but they serve notice in advance that any agreements with the C.I.O. are out. This piece of absolutism is wrapped in a great deal of high-sounding nonsense about the "right to work" and American ideals.

The issue at stake in the steel strike has now changed. In the beginning, the steel operators said that they would negotiate and settle with the union barring a *written* contract. They made a very subtle distinction between satisfying the demands of the Wagner act to negotiate *in good faith* and agreeing to a written contract. Now, however, the steel operators have declared open and complete war against the steel union and the Wagner act. They will make neither an oral nor a written agreement with the union on the ground that the C.I.O. is "irresponsible." Without some type of agreement, negotiations *in good faith* are manifestly impossible.

Tom Girdler does not really believe that the C.I.O. is "irresponsible." If it were, that would suit his purposes very well, because an irresponsible union is one which knuckles under to the employers. The C.I.O. is eminently responsible, but its responsibility is toward the workers it represents and leads. That is what Tom Girdler really resents.

Just how far these gentry may be willing to go in defense of all they hold sacred is indicated by two statements of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.—statements he made before a congressional committee after a massacre of women and children along with striking coal miners had shocked the nation in 1913:

MR. ROCKEFELLER: There is just one thing, Mr. Chairman, so far as I understand it, which can be done as things are at present to settle this strike, and that is to unionize the camps; and our interest in labor is so profound and we believe so sincerely that that interest demands that the camps shall be open camps that we expect to stand by the officers at any cost. It is not an accident that this is our position. . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: And you will do that if it costs all your property and kills all your employees?

MR. ROCKEFELLER: It is a great principle.

Perish the Thought Dept.

"A WORLD without police would be like a world without music—a very dreary world indeed." So spoke Mayor Daniel J. Shields, in sentencing union member Andy Ogando to ninety days or $100 fine after an attack by police against strikers in Johnstown, Pa.

The Fall of Bilbao

THE LOSS of Bi ao has been a great blow to the caus of Spanish democracy but, as we have eclared again and again, it is by no mean decisive. Every bit of strength possessed by e Italian and German invaders was conc trated against the Basque capital, whereas he defenders were sorely short of arms, n nitions, food, and even men, considering e extent of their front. The wonder is t that Bilbao fell but that it held out so l g.

Therein may lie the y to the next step in the war. The very co entration of fascist forces against Bilbao e bled the People's Front government to re ganize its forces on the crucial central, sout rn, and north-eastern fronts. The shift rom Caballero to Negrin was successfully completed with all the parties and both ade-union confederations pledging full pport to the new government. For the f t time in months, activity is reported on t Aragon front, and Huesca and Saragossa, el strongholds, are in peril of a loyalist s e.

It has been said th f Bilbao could have held out for six week ore, the rebels would have gained it, only eedily to lose the war. That may yet ha en because the Basque country outside Bilbao remains to be conquered. Beyond the Basques remain the Asturians. The fascists are moving towards Santander and the Asturias, but their progress may well be slow and difficult.

It now remains to be seen whether the new government can free Madrid and drive forward on the Cordoba and Aragon fronts in the offensives which the changes in the government have made possible. If these campaigns can be launched while the rebels are still occupied with the north, the outlook for the People's Front may grow brighter quickly.

"Commonweal's" Cropper

THE American Committee for Spanish Relief, organized by Michael Williams, editor of the *Commonweal,* as a "relief" organization for the rebels, is now almost defunct. The *Commonweal* admitted as much in its issue of June 4 when it said: "That the Communists of New York and their left-wing allies, together with large numbers of American citizens who have been led astray by the one-sided and largely false propaganda of the press on behalf of the so-called loyalist government of Valencia, should have done their worst to poison the minds of the public concerning the work of the American Committee for Spanish Relief is perfectly understandable. They have succeeded to a large extent in accomplishing their purpose. . . ."

The real story behind the crack-up of the committee is not, however, told by the *Commonweal.* The committee was far from united on key issues. The group representing the openly right-wing Catholic weekly, *America,* demanded outright support of the fascists through the Vatican's ambassador to Franco, Cardinal Goma. This was the original program of the whole committee, but criticism from the left and liberal press, as well as some resignations, forced the committee to take a public "non-partisan" stand just prior to its Madison Square Garden meeting.

As a result, *America* withdrew from the committee in a great huff. The mass meeting itself was a terrible flop. It was officially announced that $21,654 had been collected at the meeting, but responsible program managers estimate that the scale of arrangements must have entailed a loss. Our private, but authoritative, information is that the committee is now $8000 in the hole.

Best of all, the lower clergy in New York practically boycotted the whole affair. The committee's circular to approximately two hundred priests said in part: "Our object is to fill the hall, and it is not necessary that the tickets be sold for the price marked on their face." Only twenty-eight priests responded favorably. Others wrote back, "Can't dispose of any"; "Too busy, can't be bothered"; "No political feelings"; "Would be an insult to ask contributions"; "Can't press congregation"; "Opposed to meeting."

People's Front at Napanoch

THE League for Industrial Democracy, which convened in Napanoch, New York, over the weekend, consists of Norman Thomas's closest followers. Nevertheless, when Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party, addressed this gathering, about half the delegates responded favorably to his plea for a people's front in the United

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States. The other half revealed during the discussion that it was Trotskyist in sympathy. This would indicate that genuine Socialists, uncorrupted by the Trotskyist dogma, realize the need for a nation-wide movement of all progressive elements against Reaction. Thomas dissociated himself from Trotsky but opposed the people's front just the same. His arguments revealed a mind inhibited by utopian concepts rather than one liberated by the tenets of scientific socialism. He assumed erroneously that the working class is opposed to the people and that, therefore, socialism is opposed to the people's front. Browder's precise analysis pointed out that the interests of labor are not opposed to the interests of the people, since there are large sections of the people besides the workers who must protect themselves against fascism. And the people's front, which is indispensable for the destruction of fascism, aids in developing the movement toward socialism.

The general line laid down by Thomas was reflected in the resolutions of the L.I.D. conference. One of these called for a farmer-labor party including representatives of trade-union, farm, coöperative, and educational organizations as well as the Socialist and Communist parties. This is an advance over the hostility toward the united front which characterized Socialist leaders in the past. But it still falls short of prevailing political realities. It poses the problem too narrowly in a period when the Democratic Party seems to be breaking into a reactionary wing which coöperates with tory Republicans, and a progressive wing, sections of which tend to become allies of the C.I.O. and possible middle-class components of a broad people's front against fascism.

The Conquest of Nature

MILLIONS of Americans, admiring heroic exploits, have been thrilled by the non-stop flight of the three Soviet airmen who flew from Moscow across the North Pole to the United States. President Roosevelt spoke for these Americans when he said that "the skill and daring of the three Soviet airmen who have so brilliantly carried out this historic feat commands the highest praise."

What makes this flight especially significant is that the individual courage of the aviators would not have carried them to their goal without that collective labor which marks the socialist society they represent. In 1935, the Soviet aviator Sigismund Levanevsky attempted a non-stop flight to America and failed. Aviator Chkaloff then asked permission to make another attempt, but Stalin urged against the risk at a time when North Pole conditions had not been sufficiently studied. The present flight was finally undertaken on the basis of years of careful study in the Soviet Arctic by scientists, explorers, seamen, and aviators. Its object was neither personal glory, private adventure, nor commercial profit. It was a great social undertaking for great social ends.

The Soviet government has been trying to open navigation and develop the economy of the ice-bound Arctic coast line of the U.S.S.R. This extraordinary flight is part of that project; into it went the planning, the labor, the imagination of hundreds of experts. It is an extraordinary achievement which reflects glory not only upon the fliers but upon socialism. And at this time, when the reactionaries of our own country are conducting an intensive campaign of slander against the Soviet Union, the flight will remind Americans that the Soviet Union continues on its mighty path of conquering nature through the collective efforts of the people organized for socialism.

Blum's Burden

PREMIER BLUM chose to resign from office at a moment when other premiers, in other circumstances, might have chosen to stand their ground. His demand for plenary powers to deal with a difficult financial situation had passed the Chamber of Deputies only to fall foul of the more reactionary Senate. At the same time, however, the People's Front emerged victorious in three municipal elections, one of which is of cardinal importance. That a Communist representing the People's Front should swamp Jacques Doriot, France's would-be *Führer,* in the latter's own bailiwick, St. Denis, by a vote of 10,524 to 6,966, can be interpreted only as a strengthening of the People's Front rather than the reverse.

It would also appear that Blum might have forced his financial measure upon the Senate by resorting to a vote of confidence. Seldom does a French premier step down from office without such a trial of strength. Blum, on the other hand, chose to resign without a vote of confidence as though he were unwilling to force the issue to a victorious conclusion.

As we go to press, no new cabinet has yet been formed, though the Radical Socialist leader, Camille Chautemps, has been commissioned to make the attempt. It is altogether possible that Blum himself will get the next call should Chautemps fail. Either one will be dependent upon the Socialist and Communist deputies for support. If Chautemps should fail, Blum may include Communists in the new cabinet. That would signify a substantial shift in government policy, for the Communists have been strong in their criticism of the foreign policy pursued by former Foreign Minister Yvon Delbos, a right-wing Radical Socialist. On the other hand, should Chautemps succeed, it would mean that the Radical Socialists, who were mainly accountable for the line of the Blum government, would simply take more responsibility for their own shortcomings, as for example, in respect to Spain.

Is Hearst Cracking?

THE reported suspension of the New York *American* through a merger with the *Daily Mirror* inaugurates a new policy in the Hearst organization. Similar action may now be expected in other cities. Wherever there is more than one Hearst newspaper, there are likely to be consolidations which will throw thousands of reporters and printers out of work.

The disintegration of the Hearst newspaper empire was in the cards. An article by J. L. Sidney in the NEW MASSES of February 2 this year pointed out that Hearst needed public money and contemplated the sale of new securities. This was bound to call for a disclosure of Hearst's financial position, which he would not be able to face. The NEW MASSES article indicated that registration of the securities issue would probably be followed by widespread criticism by those whom Hearst has turned into enemies.

This prediction has been fulfilled by events. It became impossible for Hearst to sell his securities, although the issues are still pending. Meantime it is doubtful if any bankers will touch these securities, whether the S.E.C. releases them or not. The boycott against the Hearst newspapers would extend too greatly to the bonds. With the sale of his new securities made virtually impossible, Hearst is compelled to trim his sails. The reported demise of the New York *American* indicates that the trimming will be on no petty scale, and that the Hearst employees will be forced to bear the burden.

Liars Can Figure

COMMENTING on the distribution of our 63.8 billion dollar income for 1936, the *Survey of Current Business* says: "Generally, the 1936 changes tended to bring the various types of payments more closely in line with their 1929 relationships." The *Survey* adds that employees' compensation (wages and salaries) represented 66.5 percent of the 1936 income, compared to 65.6 in 1929. These figures caught the fancy of the New York *Times,* which observed editorially:

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"The comparison disposes of the frequent contention that the losses of the depression fell chiefly on labor and that the gains of the subsequent recovery have accrued chiefly to 'capital.'"

Unfortunately the same statistical table (4) that supplied this comparison has additional data, and they give a quite different picture. Leaving out work relief, total wages and salaries in 1936 were 61.5 percent of the national income—in 1929 they were 64.3 percent and the figure for 1932 and 1933 was 61.7. Still looking at Table 4, let us see what happened to *dividends* and *interest.* These items constituted 14.3 percent of our national income for 1929, in 1930 they were 15.4 percent; by 1932, with prosperity just around the corner, this figure had risen to 16.3. From that peak it declined to 13.9 in 1935 and climbed back to 14.3 during 1936. Entrepreneurial withdrawals followed much

IS THE NEW MASSES SAVED?

TEN DAYS have now passed since we issued our first appeal in these pages to *Save the New Masses.*

At that time, we said: "Those whose interests are identical with the broad masses of people must go to the people for the solution of their problems." And we should have added: *must take the masses into their confidence even in matters of detail.*

In that spirit, here are the vital statistics about our $10,000 fund for the period from June 10 through June 21.

Total sum received: $3058.12.

Total number of contributions: 263.

In breaking down these figures, some interesting facts emerge. The *average* contribution amounted to $11.62. The *most frequent* contribution was $2, the next most frequent $5. About half the total sum came from contributions of less than $50. On the other hand, we received one $500 contribution, one of $200, seven of $100 and three of $50.

Half the contributions came from New York State. Next in order came Pennsylvania with twenty, California seventeen, New England fifteen, New Jersey ten, and Illinois ten. Two contributions came from Puerto Rico.

Here are some of the letters which we were privileged to read along with the contributions:

I AM not a Communist, but I think your journal should be supported because of its opposition to fascism and war. I am enclosing my check for $10.

Newark, N. J. W. E.

HERE'S a dollar from an unemployed Catholic who has just been shown Peter McGuire's article [issue of June 22] and who, in appreciation therefor, wishes to contribute in his small way to your appeal for funds. Please publish more articles showing Communists are not opposed to Catholicism but only to "upper-class" catholicism.

Brooklyn, N. Y. J. S.

I AM enclosing a check for $100. It would be a major tragedy to me and to many like me if the NEW MASSES were to go out of existence. I feel I have received more real education from your magazine than I did from two years at college. I am not a worker and have not been active in any labor or radical movement yet, but I couldn't sleep nights if I didn't feel I was doing something to help advance the cause of socialism in the world today. Until my children are older, the only thing I can do is to save every cent possible out of my housekeeping money and give it to those who are really working for this cause, and working effectively. If it weren't for Spain, I would be able to send you a little more, but I hope to be able to do so in a few months. My best wishes for a successful drive, and thank you for all you have done for me.

Verona, N. J. C. W. O.

TO DISCONTINUE the publication of the NEW MASSES at a period when its candid news reports and militant pronouncements are sorely needed would be a tragic set-back for all progressive forces. We hope our humble contribution of $2 will do its bit.

Mound, Minn. J. G., N. F., I. R.

THIS CHECK of $2.09 was intended to pay a light bill. However, I consider the NEW MASSES a public utility of first importance, so I'm sending it to help pull you out of the red (no pun intended).

New York, N. Y. S. A.

ALTHOUGH I cannot agree *in full* with your ideas as to capital's compensation in the scheme of things, I am appreciative of your struggle to present reality to this muddled generation. I regret my very small contribution (it has to be that small). You may, however, consider me a friend.

New York, N. Y. L. A.

AS THE BEST WEEKLY in the U. S. A., you certainly merit success in your drive for funds. It is just as imperative that you hold the fort here as that the Spanish people hold their lines at Madrid.

Cutra, Puerto Rico. E. M.

I HAVE BEEN a fairly regular reader of your magazine for a year and a half. The quality of its journalism and the importance of its message make me feel that it is imperative that you should continue publication. Therefore I hope that the enclosed dollar will help a little, and am sorry, in view of the importance of our cause, that it is not more.

Morristown, N. J. A. G.

HERE IS my contribution in the amount of $50. I wish it were $500 instead, but I'm hoping that there are 199 other people in this country who will feel that they must help this *our* cause in this relatively small way.

Point Reyes, Cal. K. L.

I AM ONE of those who offered encouragement when you first solicited funds from me. My check, in answer to your appeal, is enclosed. "Things" are bad, but they would be infinitely worse if I didn't get my MASSES every Thursday. We need the NEW MASSES. It holds for us the key to the future.

Brooklyn, N. Y. M. G.

So much by way of fulfilling our obligation to let you know just how matters stand after ten days of effort.

We are, in brief, at the one-third mark of the race to raise $10,000 to put the NEW MASSES out of danger. *It is, in our opinion, a critical point, because slackening now will jeopardize all we have achieved thus far.* On the other hand, we have gained sufficient momentum really to carry through to a triumphant finish.

What about the $6941.88 which we must raise *before we can breathe freely?*

Only a relatively small percentage of our readership has contributed anything at all. If every reader of the NEW MASSES who has not yet helped, should send in a $1 bill in the next few days, we would go over the top by a considerable margin. Not that we advise sending in *only* $1. The point is that we too have only just begun to fight.

Consider a few typical examples. In California, our average weekly circulation amounts to 2500, but our contributions to date number only seventeen. Illinois, with a circulation of 1000, sent in ten contributions; and Pennsylvania, with 1500 circulation, only twenty. From Washington, D. C., only four out of 300 contributed.

Obviously, a small minority of our readers have recognized their responsibility, but the overwhelming majority have not.

For the welfare of us all, we appeal to that large majority which has not yet helped us to send their contributions *immediately.* Wire, air-mail, mail, or send funds by messenger to 31 East 27th Street, N. Y. C. Our need is your need. This is more than a campaign—this is *your* cause.

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the same course, being 15.8 percent of the national income in 1929, against 16.7 for 1932 and 15.8 in 1936.

Aside from the fact that lumping wages and salaries together necessarily overstates labor's share, these comparisons seem to dispose of the frequent contention that the losses of the depression fell chiefly on "capital" and the gains of the subsequent recovery have accrued chiefly to labor.

Photos Don't Lie

THE reason given by *Paramount News* for suppressing its newsreel of the Chicago Memorial Day steel-strike massacre is an obvious sham. Audiences trained on the Hollywood school of gangster films are not likely to stage a "riotous demonstration" in the theater upon seeing cops beating people into insensibility, and worse. Against whom would the riot be directed, anyway? The board of directors of Republic Steel and the Chicago municipal authorities are hardly likely to be found in the immediate vicinity.

The real reason behind the film's suppression is its decisive evidence that virtually every newspaper in the country lies, and continues to lie, about the responsibility for violence in the strike areas. The myth that the steel strikers have resorted to violence to gain their just ends is now the basis for the whole campaign of slander and misrepresentation against them. That is why Tom Girdler of Republic Steel refuses to confer with the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee, and that is why 95 percent of the press carries on a publicity pogrom against the strikers.

Even after the St. Louis *Post Dispatch* performed a genuine service to the American people in breaking the story of the film (for which, though it is Pulitzer-owned, it is very unlikely to get the Pulitzer award), the venal press still continued to blast away at the strikers with the same old legend. Not a comma has been changed in the editorials which, day after day, have defended the steel tycoons on the ground that there can be no compromise with labor violence.

And all this time, the film record exists —and has been described—which would enable the public to make up its own mind on this very crucial point!

Turn on the Heat!

WE would like to see a little "crowd hysteria," on the part of our readers. It will be recalled that that was what might happen to audiences if the suppressed film were shown, according to A. J. Richards, editor of *Paramount News*.

The kind of hysteria *en masse* we would like to see is for every man and woman who reads these pages to rush to the nearest telegram office and write:

"Paramount News
"544 West 44 Street
"New York City

"Your suppression Chicago strike newsreel against public interest. Urge film's release to give public opportunity to make up own mind on responsibility strike violence."

Newsreel Not Fit to See — Herb Kruckman

The Gruening Myth

ONE of the most ominous aspects of the Puerto Rican situation is that the exposure of Governor Blanton Winship's complicity in the Ponce massacre is playing right into the hands of the equally reprehensible Dr. Ernest Gruening, one-time liberal and now colonial straw-boss. Gruening, now head of the Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration, wields immense power because of his control over large sums allotted to his organization for relief purposes. He is Winship's chief rival in the struggle for power over Puerto Rico.

Gruening's appointment to Puerto Rico aroused high hopes that he would finally reverse the old policy of blood-and-iron colonial rule. Today he is the most hated man on the island. Winship is a retired general who never has posed as anything but a despot. Gruening, on the other hand, utilized his liberal background to demoralize the radical and labor forces on the island. Responsible authorities have charged his administration with having squandered money shamelessly on worthless "projects." A number of excellent reports on the P.R.R.A. have been suppressed. One was a "progress" report, with an introduction by Dr. Tomas Blanco, head of the newly formed Puerto Rican Civil Liberties Committee, and Antonio Colorado, on present conditions on the island. A study of the island's sugar industry by Esteban Bird was also suppressed. The "liberal" Gruening has thus repeatedly violated the simplest requirements of free inquiry by his own experts.

Gruening has now broken with Winship openly. The *Correspondencia* of June 5 carried a front-page article of obviously inspired nature to the effect that Gruening has definitely decided to withdraw his support from Winship, that Secretary of Interior Ickes was very upset about the whole Ponce matter, etc., etc. The upshot is that Gruening is delighted over the present turn of events because the Hays report does not mention him. We have it on the best authority that Gruening informed Hays while the latter was still on the island that he was "shocked" at the report. At a subsequent dinner, Gruening asked to be left out of the report, to which Hays replied: "The governor must go, and don't you come out and defend him, or we'll get both of you out."

Winship must go, but every person acquainted with affairs on the island knows that conditions will not be better if Gruening takes the general's place.

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The Steel Wolf

Tom Girdler, generalissimo of the independents, regards workers' necks as rungs on which he will climb to power

By Lou Partnow

WHO is Tom Mercer Girdler?

His sudden leap into the headlines is characteristic of his whole career. The name Girdler was hidden on the inside financial pages of the newspapers until nine men were killed in front of the Chicago plant of Republic Steel. Long before this, however, Girdler groomed himself for just such a crisis by serving an apprenticeship in the back-rooms of industry and the alleyways of finance. He has risen by steady, remorseless steps until today he stands unchallenged as commander-in-chief of "little steel," which means the combine of Republic (of which Girdler is president and chairman of the board), Inland, Youngstown Sheet & Tube, and Bethlehem.

Girdler's Republic Steel began as an inefficient corporation hammered together out of four small steel companies by Cyrus Eaton in the late twenties. Eaton, known as "Cyrus the Great" to his admirers, planned to build a steel empire in the mid-west which would displace Pittsburgh as the center of the industry. In his manipulations for Youngstown Sheet & Tube, Eaton crossed the path of Charlie Schwab of Bethlehem. A struggle followed in which Republic stock fell from 80 to 2 and its bonds sold for thirty cents to the dollar. Eaton's dream of an industrial empire collapsed; Bethlehem was a company to be won over, not fought.

It was this same Eaton who took Girdler out of Jones & Laughlin Steel and put him in charge of Republic with orders to keep it afloat. Gradually, Girdler pushed Eaton out of the picture, but he had learned from Eaton's experience with Bethlehem.

Three hard facts faced the new master of Republic Steel in making it an efficient, profit-making organization. First, Republic's type of output. A light steel company, it chiefly sold high-priced specialized steels for boilers, stoves and furniture; the rest went for autos, trains, containers, and to storage houses. This type of output was something Girdler could not change; the plants were so constructed. So he developed what he had, forced research in alloys and stainless steel until his metal was known for its heat and weather-resisting qualities. He became the greatest producer of alloys in the U. S. He knew, however, that if he wanted to invade the market of heavy steel, he would have to join hands with a company like Bethlehem whose business in girders and rails was second only to U. S. Steel.

His second problem was the age of the plants. None of the mills handed down to him were new. They were still rolling 36-inch strips, while other companies were making 76 and 96. He renovated the mills little by little over a span of years. He recently built a wire factory to supply farmers and a probable war. He is now building the most modern rolling plant for a 98-inch welded strip.

Scott Johnston

Tom Girdler

Third, and most important, the location of the plants. Most of them were in the interior of Ohio, around the Mahoning Valley. To make pig iron you need coal, limestone, and iron ore. Limestone can be gotten everywhere. But ore had to be shipped from Minnesota and Michigan. Coal had to come from Pennsylvania, West Virginia, or Kentucky. Freight charges on raw materials alone amounted to millions. Then the finished steel had to go back to the market in Chicago and Detroit.

To cut down on this cost, Girdler immediately began angling for Corrigan-McKinney in Cleveland. The possibility of organizing one of the biggest mergers of modern times captured him. He pursued stock-holders like cattle, with letters, postcards, pamphlets, even using unprecedented newspaper ads. One ad in the *Wall Street Journal* trumped the plea, "If you have any shares of Republic, don't let them die of inertia. Bring them out and put them to work. No matter how small your holdings—send in your proxy!" It took him four years to gather enough proxies to back him up; meanwhile he had made a deal with Cleveland Cliffs which controlled fifty-five percent of Corrigan-McKinney. When a federal law-suit threatened his merger, he justified his actions in court by saying that U. S. Steel produced twenty-seven million tons a year, while Republic produced only five. In the shadow of "big steel's" crime, he won out.

Now Girdler had modern steel plants at Cleveland, dock facilities for shipping his own ore, a sheet mill at Monroe only twenty miles from Detroit, and fifty million tons of ore in Minnesota and Michigan, a twenty-year supply, which he could not make much use of without expanding still further. He made raw steel at the Great Lakes, then had it hauled inland to be finished in the Mahoning Valley.

At the same time, he inveigled the Kahn family holding twenty-five percent of Truscon Steel, to support a merger with his Republic. Truscon was then the largest fabrication plant of light building-shapes, window frames, doors and lockers, in the mid-west. Girdler made it the largest in the world, lining it up with his own subsidiaries, and gaining storage houses and distributing centers in every important city.

Girdler had integrated raw supplies on the one hand, and the consumption market on the other. That he had cut the value of the stock of Corrigan and Truscon and Republic, and diluted it all with two million more shares, did not bother him. In 1935 he angled for a canal on W.P.A. funds that would connect the Mahoning River to the Ohio; but U. S. Steel outfought him because it threatened their own center, Pittsburgh.

There were 43,000 stock-holders in Republic Steel. Legally, they owned the plants. But as they were scattered all over the country, none owning more than six percent, it was, therefore, simple for Girdler to become the actual dictator. Under him, for five steady years, Republic lost money amounting to thirty million dollars. Then in 1935, there was a profit of four million, and for 1936, a leap to nine and one half million.

He had laid a profitable groundwork through advertising, high-pressure salesmanship unknown before in steel, and mergers. The extent to which he had been interlocking directorates for future development in "little steel" was clear; the federal government contemplated legal action against him for interlocking companies which were competitive only by virtue of legal fictions. Youngstown Sheet & Tube, Inland Steel, Jones & Laughlin and Republic are still called, absurdly enough, "independents."

But in his drive for power he forgot one thing—or rather, he chose to suppress it. On the backs of fifty thousand workers lies the whole profit-making efficiency of the corpora-

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tion. He tried to throw them a company union sop and then a plan of work-distribution whereby each would earn twenty dollars a month. Only when forced, did he take official notice of this human element; with profits sky-high, he increased his vigilance, smuggled arms and gas into the plants, and armed thugs, spies and company police for industrial war.

BORN on a small farm in Indiana, Girdler likes to be called Tom, a name inherited from a grandfather who was a country doctor. His father kicked all lofty notions out of his head and made him settle down to tend the farm. But he ran off to Lehigh Tech, of which he is now a trustee. He got his stamped degree, and soon after became London salesman for Buffalo Forge where he sold heating apparatus for a living. Then over a stretch of years he began to climb. He worked for Oliver Iron in Pittsburgh; then as assistant superintendent in Colorado rail mills; and later as assistant in Atlanta. He was gathering experience all over the country.

But it wasn't till 1914, when he joined Jones & Laughlin, that he got into his real stride. In four years he rose from assistant of the Aliquippa mills to president, the head of one of the tightest company hell-towns on the continent, known as the "Siberia of America." Labor organizers who attempted to distribute literature were not sent to prison; he opened the insane asylum for them.

In Girdler's system of bookkeeping, workers were man-hours. In 1936, there was a twenty-five percent increase of man-hours over the previous year; that meant speed-up. When he came to Republic in 1929, the first thing he did to cut cost was to fire veteran foremen

A. Alay

and mill hands so ruthlessly that Youngstown has not yet forgotten it. When he merged with Corrigan, he went through the mills with a squad of bookkeepers, and dismissed hundreds. "Labor policy too lax," he said.

He admits he likes horses more than he does men. He is a dry little man with a large nose and a large genial manner, hard and unscrupulous. He likes to describe himself as "bald as hell," and without sentiment. He is precise, with an eye always on figures; his own "earning-power" reaches $130,000 a year. His workers arrive at the office at eight sharp, and they cannot leave before six. He always gets there at twenty to nine. He drives his own auto around the state, to watch horse races, baseball and football games. He reads tons and tons of horse and dog stories and Westerns. His desk is always strewn with them.

He is careful to nurture a legend of reticence and inaccessibility; he calls himself the typical steel man, two-fisted, hard-boiled. In order to preserve the idea he wears his hat in the office. He enjoys swearing, and no one among his associates surpasses him in the art of telling dirty stories.

THE builders of U. S. Steel, Morgan, Carnegie, Rockefeller, put out sixty-five percent of the nation's steel at first. That was around 1900. But they began to coast, refusing to repair plants or move to better spots; in 1935 they produced only thirty-eight percent. "Pioneering don't pay," said Carnegie. And so "big steel" ignored the biggest growing markets, automobiles, alloys, stainless steel.

This gave Republic and the other "independents" their opportunity. The independents grew so fast that they earned proportionately more than U. S. Steel. They pushed it out of the lead in Wall Street, and even in the American Iron and Steel Institute which has always been associated with big steel. It was clear to Girdler that he could match the thirty-eight percent of the industry's output of "big steel" by adding Bethlehem's thirteen percent to Republic's nine percent, with the remainder accounted for by Jones & Laughlin, Youngstown Sheet & Tube and Inland.

When "big steel" recently recognized union labor, Girdler saw his golden opportunity. Carnegie had crushed the Homestead strike of 1898, and became a captain of industry as a result of it. Judge Gary had crushed the steel strike of 1919, and took his place with Carnegie. Tom Girdler seeks to duplicate their savagery in 1937.

Girdler is no person of qualms. His stake is fixed in the greatest industrial empire of the country. None of the nine he killed disturbs his sleep. Each dead worker to him measures one more step in his upward climb.

★ ★ ★

Gentlemen, I Address You Publicly

no marvel though the leprous infant dye
when the sterne dam envenometh the dug
EDWARD III

they said no one would ever care
they said it would never make any difference
and after the years of waiting
it didn't it hadn't mattered originally
it didn't matter then
but why do they stand so
why do they never go
what are they waiting for
what monstrous new planet
glowing in a cloud of omen
must appear poised on their red hot alps
and now bolting from sleep
and unbelieving hearing
in the night echoing and reëchoing
the glaciers walking or the midnight
recurrent smashing of a trainwreck
but nobody knows now
they say there were many
before the wars
now nobody cares
this knife is guaranteed to float on water
it's made for you take it it's yours
as you lie under the rocking stars on the organic
vertigious lift of the ocean
it will float out chill and sly
creeping under the sternum in an inexplicable
shiver nothing much will happen
the eyes half open the hair floating
the starlight glittering on the moist teeth
they will remain the same
only the heart and the lungs will stop
but the breasts will go on rising
falling with the undulant ocean
each night thereafter the corpuscular
animation of the sea will shine more thickly
until at last
aureate and upright
walking waist deep on the breaking combers
some one screaming sees it from a boat

KENNETH REXROTH.

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Göttingen—Celebration or Funeral?

The bicentenary of a famous German university spotlights some dark phases of Nazi "culture"

By Mark Graubard

IT is not without some pride and satisfaction that the American public may point to the fact that the vast majority of our institutions of higher learning have rejected the Nazi bid to participate in the celebrations of the bicentenary anniversary of the University of Göttingen on June 30, 1937. Some of these universities had sent representatives last year to the Heidelberg celebrations, and there learned a lesson of highest educational value. They discovered to their surprise that they were actually participating in a funeral of all that Heidelberg had stood for, and not in a celebration of its role in the culture of Germany or of its past achievements.

They heard the Reichsminister for Education, Herr Rust, state in triumph that the new Germany will be the heir of Sparta with its idea of discipline, and not of Athens with its culture, and that "the old idea of science based on the belief in the supremacy of the intellect is finished." The Nazi attitude toward culture was even better expressed some time later by Dr. Kahrstedt, professor of German history at Göttingen, on German Empire Day, which he designated as the day to take this vow:

> We renounce international science. We renounce the international republic of learning. We renounce research for its own sake. We teach and learn medicine not to increase the number of known microbes, but to keep the German people strong and healthy. We teach and learn history not to say how things actually happened, but to instruct the German people from the past. We teach and learn the sciences not to discover abstract laws, but to sharpen the implements of the German people in competition with other peoples. If the German universities make and keep this vow, then it will naturally come about again that they are the first to be consulted in all cultural and spiritual questions.

Of similiar content were all the speeches at the "jubilee" of Heidelberg in the summer of 1936. They were all veritable funeral orations rolling in mockery over the corpse of a past that was trampled by uniformed orators and wing-collared officials. But these speeches only gave dignity and glamour to that which National Socialism has destroyed.

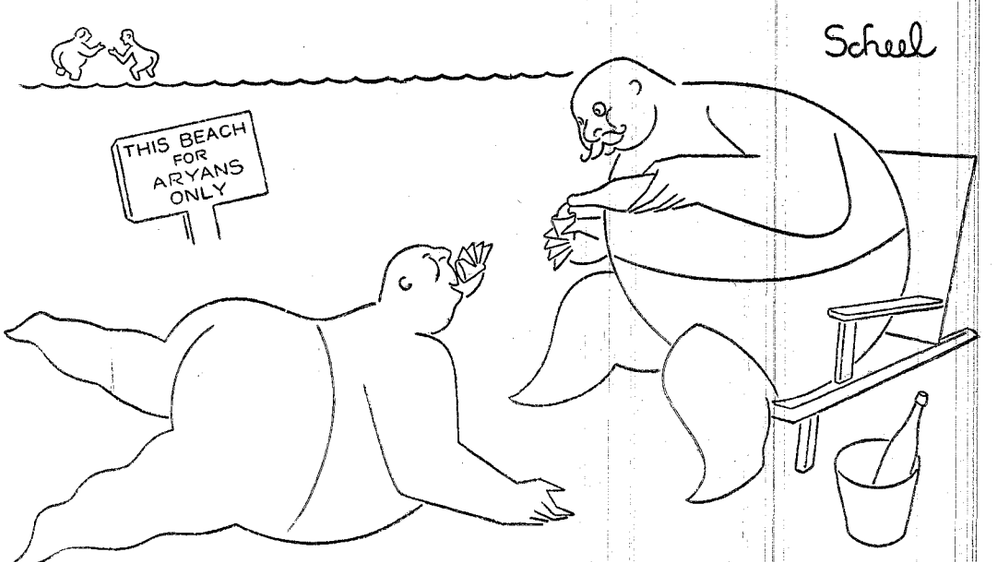
The *Brown Book of Hitler Terror* reproduces a photograph of a German Socialist led through the streets in a garbage cart, surrounded by a gang of hilarious Nazis. The victim's head is shaved, his face is calm and set, his eyes look with serenity into space. He happens to be a former member of the Reichstag and a war veteran with two wooden legs for medals. The Manchester *Guardian* first printed this photo; its columnist remarked that the man had a most overpowering and irresistible dignity, a dignity accentuated and brought into sharp relief by the looks of his tormentors. The dignity of Christ looking down from the cross upon the brutal hirelings of Rome, the dignity of Servetus or Bruno gazing from the heights of their burning stakes upon the church-led mobs. It was precisely such dignity that filled the halls of Heidelberg during the "celebration," the dignity of its destroyed past, of its living professors scattered in exile all over the world.

"The more vociferous and violent the Nazi speeches, the more depressing their ravings, the stronger grew the sense of tragedy of that which was gone and of our sad present." These are the words of a Heidelberg instructor who is still teaching there and who participated in the show. "The dead are dead, but I'm still alive, I must see it all, listen to it and suffer in silence in my S.A. uniform." We agreed it was a new kind of funeral, one in which the institution and its aims are buried and its true servants exiled or tortured at home.

What the faculty suffered is nothing compared to the fate of the teaching schedule. The facts are, however, that in 1932 the faculty consisted of two hundred and fifteen teachers and now there are one hundred and eighty; of these eighty-one are Nazi appointees. In the current catalog the title of Rector Groh has been changed to Führer Groh. The person next in position is the Leiter (leader) of the instructorial staff, Herr Schluter, who, oddly enough, is not himself an instructor. Next comes Ernst Kreuzer, the leader of the Nazi undergraduate student organization. After that follow the names of the dean and other members of the faculty.

The following figures gathered by a special correspondent of *Nature*, a most reliable official publication of British science, indicate the number of changes in the Heidelberg faculty. In the faculty of science the percentage of new appointments is 31, in theology 36, in law 38, in philosophy 49, and in medicine 56 percent. In addition it should be borne in mind that many chairs are still vacant because even the brave and efficient Nazi party machine has not yet found enough worthy party members with sufficient excuse for occupying them.

THE REFORMS in the actual courses listed and taught are equally drastic. Old courses are eliminated and replaced by a flock of new ones. The school of law has abandoned the courses on international law. One is urged, however, to attend lectures on folk and race, German military law, or recent political history. In the faculty of philosophy new courses by new men are offered on foundations of National-Socialist philosophy, German philosophy, folk philosophy, or the nature of ancient German religion, Germany's right to colonies, etc. In the faculty of medicine where the dismissals have been most numerous and where nearly the entire cancer research staff has been dismissed, the following new courses are offered: Nazi philosophy and race theory, folk and race, first aid with special reference to military sport and gas defense. As to extra-curricular work of the student body and basis



"Here at least they know who we are."

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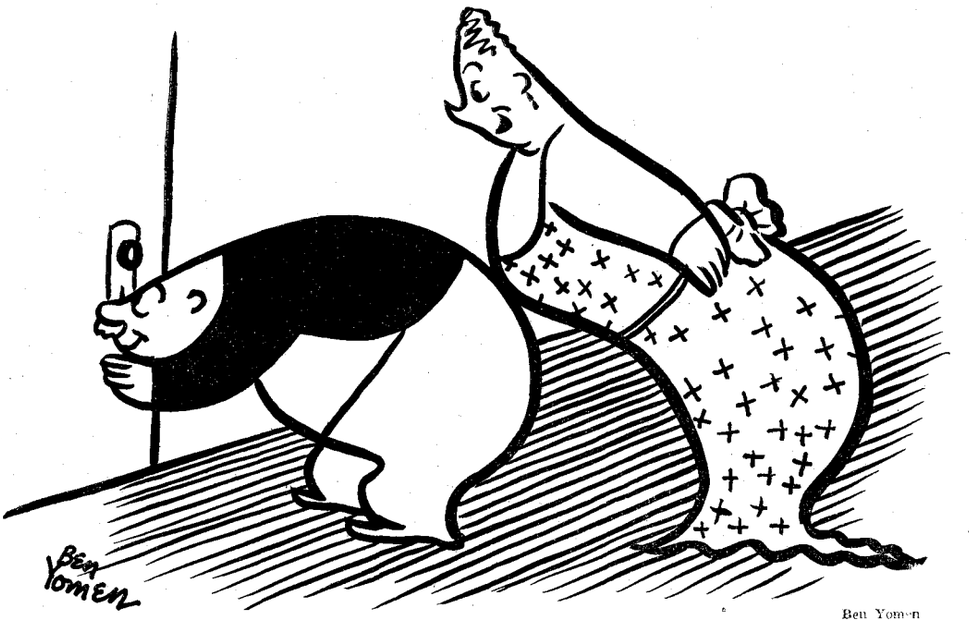
for admission—the Nazi student organization decides upon that.

Here lies Heidelberg buried. All this is known to the world and the curt refusals of most American and of all the British universities to participate in the Göttingen funeral is partly due to the growing realization by even the most conservative educators that fascism tramples learning and will use it only for war, aggression and self-preservation in power.

THIS MONTH the Nazis are celebrating the bicentenary of the University of Göttingen. The funeral that will take place there will be even sadder than the one at Heidelberg, because Göttingen is famous for its tradition of militant liberalism. One hundred years ago, seven distinguished members of the university protested against the revocation of the liberal constitution granted a few years earlier to the people of Hanover. The constitution was revoked by Ernst Augustus, the son of George III of England, in whose reign the American Revolution was fought. The "Göttingen Seven" were expelled in 1837. They included the famous physicist Wilhelm Weber, the brothers Grimm, and Ewald, the father of scientific biblical criticism. They live in history as a monument to scientists and thinkers who have courageously fought for the freedom of humanity against the tyranny of a few. The tyrant Ernst Augustus is gone and forgotten for almost a hundred years, but the names of the Grimms, of Weber and Ewald have lived in nurseries, in laboratories, in libraries, in the records and memories of humanity. Their names have lived not only for their special achievements but for their fight for the human rights of the people.

Now in 1937 Ernst Augustus has returned with a swastika, steel rod, machine guns and big mouthed orators. Tyranny in uniform, big speeches instead of royal decrees, mass propaganda and coercion instead of the hated royal seal. The tyranny is far worse, its effects on learning more complete.

Seven were expelled in 1837. But a hundred years later in 1937, fifty-two out of two hundred thirty-eight or 22 per cent of the number of full professors, to say nothing of instructors and assistants, were expelled, some of them merely for remote Jewish ancestry. The list of expelled professors includes Max Born, one of the most distinguished contributors to theoretical physics; Felix Bernstein, director of the Institute for Mathematical Statistics; Richard Courant, chief organizer of the mathematical research department; James Franck, winner of Nobel prize for physics in 1925, who resigned when his colleagues were being dismissed; Herman Fraenkel, well known Greek scholar; V. M. Goldschmidt, geologist and mineralogist of international reputation; Edmund Laudau, a Norwegian who resigned and accepted a chair at Oslo, considered one of the greatest mathematicians of our day; the historian of science Otto Neugebauer; Emmy Noether, one of the most prominent women mathematicians; Karl Saller, anatomist, himself once a Nazi, but he could not swallow the "race" theory and its implications in science and so resigned and was attacked and abused; Hertha Sponer, distinguished physicist; Herman Weil, famous philosopher and mathematical physicist brought from Zurich in 1930, expelled because the woman he loved was Jewish, and many others besides.



Ben Yomen

"Maybe it's that wolf you wrote off as a loss in your last income tax."

The stage is all set for the most dramatic funeral in history. The speeches will be of the same kidney as those delivered at Heidelberg, but the fact that they will take place at Göttingen only intensifies the tragedy and the meaning of the affair. Göttingen, the symbol of united efforts on the part of university men and the nation to fight against oppression of the people, the pride of European universities in the common struggle for democracy and freedom, will now be trampled by Nazi boots, by the blackshirts and by the vulgarities of a Rust or a Goebbels. The dignity of the past and of what has been destroyed will only be more sharply brought forward. It is good that the universities of America and England have stayed out of this tragic farce, but the press must be there by all means. Let the world know how a nation suffers, how its cultural and social achievements which the world once respected are now being defiled and destroyed.

So much for official funerals. But there are thousands of living intellectuals, artists, writers, scientists, and teachers in Germany today who suffer in silence and who simply cannot work. Some of them were Nazis or merely innocent individuals who thought that only radicals would be bothered by the new regime, but certainly not they. Their plight is in many ways more tragic than that of the exiles, many of whom have found positions in England, in the United States, France and other countries.

Ernst Wiechert is a fairly competent Nazi novelist, the only one about whom the Nazis could boast. Last year he delivered a speech at the University of Munich without having submitted it for the approval of Nazi politicians. He is now in a concentration camp. And he is not the only one, there are many like him.

There are thousands, however, who are not officially punished, who belong to the Storm Troops for protection. Their confessions make a tragic story. They see party hooligans appointed to university chairs once famous all over the world. They see universities to which they are sentimentally attached degraded and ruined. Even students complain quite openly that they do not learn anything and they wonder how they will be able to do justice to future jobs.

For a while German intellectuals seriously discussed whether they should submit completely to Nazi dictates and at least save the institutions and culture they cherished, or give up and shut their mouths in despair. Most of them were forced by economic conditions to keep their jobs and adapt themselves. They suffered most because at every step they met the iron hand of party control. A student at a well-known German university failed last year in a mathematics examination. He appealed to the party unit on the ground that the problem which he could not solve was a Jewish invention, originated by a mathematician of Jewish origin. He passed. All scientific, literary, and artistic work and publications are coordinated under government control. Woe to those whose results are frowned upon by the Nazis. Some of these artists or investigators are good Nazis themselves, but, being trained in "international science," they cannot help being honest craftsmen. In their innocence they wonder why the party machine is crushing them.

Such is fascism and such is its work. Let those who do not care to think about it in abstract social-philosophic terms look at the facts. Reality is a mighty teacher whose lessons talk the plainest language.

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Left-Wing Publishing in England

The short history of the Left Book Club reveals some truly exciting developments

By Victor Gollancz

A LEFT publisher under capitalism is a prisoner in a vicious circle. Whereas an ordinary publisher produces luxuries, for which he is entitled to charge as much as he thinks he can get, a left publisher, trying to supply first and foremost the needs of the working-class movement, has got to issue low-priced books to reach the very people who need them most.

At the same time, low prices need large sales, and large sales need wide publicity, and wide publicity—except in the form of advertising—is just about the last thing a left publisher can expect for his books. With rare exceptions, when a book's importance or news value cannot be ignored, every left book that is published has to break through a barrage of indifference and hostility in the press before news of it can reach its potential readers. Where a new novel or the memoirs of an aging statesman can be certain of columns of sympathetic criticism, a socialist book of the most profound importance must expect to be dismissed with an inch or two of misleading comment which usually conveys the impression that it is dull, doctrinaire, or perfectly unreliable.

How to break this barrage and get the book to the public that wants it; how to reduce its price so that this public can buy—these are the problems that have to be solved before we can get any wide distribution of left literature. Through the Left Book Club I think we are solving them, as well as doing much more, which we did not anticipate when we founded the club.

The aim of the club is to help in the terribly urgent struggle for world peace and a better social order, and against fascism, by supplying the *knowledge* upon which a really well-informed and determined core of public opinion can be based. In fact, it is designed to be a great educational service for the labor and progressive movement, which, by providing facts nd explaining the theory of socialism by ich these facts can be understood—we are oriously sufferers in England from lack of ory—will also help to unify the at present ngerously scattered forces of peace and emocracy.

Every month the selection committee, consisting of Prof. Harold Laski, John Strachey, and myself, chooses a book in accordance with this aim, which every member of the club receives in a special, limp-cloth edition for two shillings sixpence (about sixty-two cents in American currency), although the ordinary edition for the public costs anything from five to sixteen shillings (about $1.25 to $4). In the year during which it has been in existence, the club has issued such books as Maurice Thorez's *France Today and the People's Front,* Rudolph Olden's *Hitler the Pawn,* John Strachey's *Theory and Practice of Socialism,* Stephen Spender's *Forward from Liberalism,* Professor Salvemini's *Under the Axe of Fascism,* and Leo Huberman's *Man's Worldly Goods.* In the near future, choices will include Professor Brady's *The Structure of German Fascism,* Joseph Freeman's *An American Testament,* a book on India by R. Palme Dutt, and a trio of books on the past, present, and immediate future of the British labor movement, by Allen Hutt, G. D. H. Cole, and C. R. Attlee, leader of the parliamentary Labor Party, which we decided were urgently needed and were able to commission specially for the club. For while the work of the selection committee was at first chiefly to choose books from existing manuscripts, now perhaps its most important work is to consider what books are needed and plan to get them written.

WHEN the club started, a year ago, we hoped for a membership of 15,000, and many people thought we were wild optimists to do so. Today, membership has reached 45,000, and it is increasing at a rate of 1000 to 2000 a month.

As a result of this really extraordinary growth, the club is at the same time expanding its activities in all sorts of unforeseen ways. It is now possible to produce special, cheap editions of other books which members can obtain as well as the monthly choice: an educational series, at sixpence (about twelve cents), a series of reprints of famous books, a series of topical books, which deal with immediate situations. These are rushed out irregularly when they are needed. The value of such a service, at a time when the turn of events is becoming increasingly bewildering and dangerous, is obvious.

Another exceedingly important development which the growth of the club has made possible is going to take place in the near future with the transformation of the club paper, the *Left News,* from a free, monthly bulletin, for club members, to a three-penny weekly for the general public. This bulletin has hitherto consisted of an editorial, giving news of the club's developments, by myself, a topical article by John Strachey, a review of the choice by either John Strachey or Professor Laski, and of each additional book available to club members by some suitable reviewer, an article on the Soviet Union by Ivor Montagu, and often one special article, or reprint of an important speech or document which members are likely to be interested in and have difficulty in obtaining from other sources.

In becoming a public weekly, the paper will lose none of these features, except my editorial, which will be printed instead in a free, monthly bulletin for club members. The free monthly will be devoted to members' correspondence and details of the activities of the Left Book Club groups which are springing up everywhere, and are probably the most important and unforeseen development of all. The weekly *Left News* will continue the policy of the present paper, of printing long, serious, and informative articles and literary criticism, and will undoubtedly be an extremely important new organ of left opinion. For there is at present no weekly paper of comparable aims and seriousness which reaches anything like the circulation this paper will have.

And finally, there is the springing up of Left Book Club groups all over the country to be considered. These arose spontaneously: a member wrote to ask to be put in touch with other members in her district with whom she could meet and discuss the monthly book. The suggestion was printed in the *Left News,* and the idea caught on. There are now some six hundred groups scattered over Great Britain, although government censorship seriously hampers such developments in most parts of the British empire. The groups have sprung up all over, in Cornish villages, in the "distressed areas," in colleges, factories, and hospitals, in suburbs which are a by-word for conservatism and snobbery. They range in size from groups of half a dozen people to forty or fifty. Although their primary object is to discuss the book of the month, and raise their standard of political education by thrashing out and examining their similarities and divergences of opinion, they have begun to take on all kinds of other work as well, through which, incidentally, very many left-wing people who have been passive before, are being brought into activity.

For example, many groups during the past winter have given most successful film shows. Many more are, with the help of the Unity Theater—now doing such admirable work in this country—setting up theater groups, and working to produce plays and sketches for performance at local working-class and progressive functions, street-corner meetings and so on.

I consider that this, although a side-line for the Left Book Club groups, is a perfect example of how this movement can supplement the work of the other sections of the labor

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movement. Such propaganda work as this has always been fearfully neglected, presumably because active members of the labor movement are always overwhelmed with work, and are more profoundly interested in questions other than cultural ones. Members of Left Book Club groups are often primarily interested in the cultural and educational side, and are, therefore, willingly filling this serious gap which has inevitably existed hitherto in left-wing propaganda work.

In all this, it might be thought, there is a danger that the new movement will take active members away from the broader labor movement: the groups might, so to say, take themselves out of circulation. But I do not think there is any real danger of this happening, for two reasons: too many members of the club are already active members of the Communist party or Communist party members of other organizations to see [illegible] club, they [illegible], more use to their organizations, and that they make use of the club in the labor movement, in fact, not make it a rival to the other organizations in the movement. Secondly, we are finding that very many members of the club, who have never been in any organization before, are becoming convinced for the first time of the need for their participating in the work of the labor movement as a whole. For the knowledge they are acquiring through the club is increasing their political understanding and convictions to the point where they begin to feel that they must play an active part instead of merely sympathizing as hitherto.

For example, the vast majority of the club membership are staunch adherents of the policy of unity of the labor movement, and a people's front against fascism and war. They use the club to forward this work, by winning new members for it, who through studying and discussing the books will be helped to get rid of prejudices—enthusiastically fostered—which are holding them back from supporting the unity campaign at present sweeping through this country. It is interesting to realize that while by far the largest proportion of recruits made during the first few months of the club's existence came through advertising in the national press, club members themselves are more and more becoming the chief source of recruiting.

What will be the future of the Left Book Club? At the moment, as was to be expected, it is facing increasing attacks from both left (or rather "left") and right. But it is continuing steadily to grow. Some believe that its membership will become stabilized at about 50,000. But I have greater hopes for it. I see no reason at all why, with the coöperation and enthusiasm of its members, the club should not grow to twice that size. It came into existence at a time when there was a swiftly increasing interest in Marxism, and in the struggle against war and fascism. Some years ago I do not think it would have been conceivable to run a club at all on its present scale. That interest is still increasing and, if anything, more swiftly than before. The struggle in Spain, the increasing aggressiveness of fascism everywhere, the present boom based on the war industry are all waking more and more people up to the fact that terrific changes are taking place in the world, and that they are concerned in them and have got to do something about them. The first thing such people want is *more knowledge*. That is primarily what the Left Book Club was founded to provide, and, therefore, it seems to me inevitable that the club will continue to grow in size and importance alongside the growing size, activity and unity of the labor movement.

Sylvia Wald

The Massachusetts Hierarchy Answers the Basque Refugees

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The Tragedy of Literary Waste

The relationship between publisher and writer is seen as typical of capitalist cruelty and anarchy

By Henry Hart

THE validity of literature's function in society is no longer debatable. Even illiterate men and women have responded to its power, and human beings in all epochs have individually acknowledged that life is fuller, more explicable, and more potential because of it. Literature has been one of the most potent reagents in the dissolution of those localisms and individualisms which have divided man from man. By depicting the universal kinship of man, literature has accelerated his liberation from the ignorances of his infancy. Literature has always emphasized the future. It has indicated what the future would or could be like, and not infrequently it has been the source from which men have drawn the inspiration to transform a wish into a fact.

It would seem that anything so valuable should be one of the first concerns of society. But this has never been so, and writers, scientists, and artists, instead of being the leaders of society, have been the lackeys of kings, generals, priests, politicians, and bankers in all eras, including our own. Writers have followed, they have not led. Among the tragic results are countless generations of ignorant, incomplete and distorted lives; an incalculable waste of creative human talent, energy, and organizing ability; and an impending war that will destroy half the world.

This all-pervasive historical waste, so vast that it cannot adequately be depicted, had its root cause in what is politely called the economics of scarcity. Before the industrial revolution the economics of scarcity was a fact. It is not a fact today. It is an anachronism, and a euphemism for private property and the profit system.

The economics of scarcity had and has but one criterion for evaluating any human activity: Will it make money? Writers have always known that such a criterion was irrational. They have been and still are among the most conspicuous victims of its insane and wasteful domination. Contemporary society has only this to say to the writer: If you can successfully withstand every adverse economic and psychological attack, and if you can cajole, bribe, threaten, or hornswoggle someone into publishing what you write, you are a writer, but if you cannot do this, *you are not a writer.* To the publisher contemporary capitalist society says even less: If you can make money you may continue to call yourself a publisher, *but not otherwise.*

But what is even more irrational, 95 percent of the writers and 100 percent of the publishers accept this as an immutable fact and limitation, and both of them, with feeble-minded humility and valor, patiently try to write and to publish literature under conditions that foredoom the writer to neuroticism and the publisher to bankruptcy. The literature that is written and produced under such unfavorable conditions is, obviously enough, piddling compared to the literature which could be produced under social sanctions which *exalt the creative in man rather than the predatory.* The money criterion often acts like a contraceptive, preventing writers from even conceiving new and penetrating literature. And the money criterion is a more potent censor than the Pope.

The writer has never accepted the criterion "Will it make money?" He has known that the application of such an irrelevancy to any of the arts and sciences resulted in sterility, error, and waste. He will not pretend that the money criterion is a valid point of reference. The result has been that the writer has been kicked around from furnished room to the luxurious offices of advertising agencies and those palaces of prostitution which are madamed by public-relations counselors. That is, he was while the capitalist piracy was at its height. But when all had been stolen, and the population of the entire world could no longer buy food, the writer, living with his mother-in-law, or sitting in some Hooverville, realized at last that the literature he had been writing was unrelated to life as it is actually organized, and hence literature that was untrue, and hence waste.

And what of the publisher? The publisher is the kind of fool who *knows* that employing a money criterion to measure human effort is insane but who will not admit that he knows it and acts as though it wasn't so. If he acted in accordance with his belief, he wouldn't be a publisher. He capitulates, and he goes into business. But he doesn't go into big business, where theft is on a large scale, but where the people you must associate with have never experienced an idea. The potential publisher can't quite endure such people, and so he goes into a business that brings him in contact with those people who don't believe in the money criterion and don't pretend that they do—that is, writers.

The publisher tries to perform an impossible feat. He tries to sell books under a system which compels the price of those books to be so high that people can't buy them. This is the basic economic fact about the publishing business which no publisher will face. If it is true, publishers say, why aren't we all bankrupt? The answer is they all *will* be bankrupt sooner or later and are kept temporarily solvent by stealing from the only person who isn't predacious, the writer. From the printer, binder or paper manufacturer the publisher will not steal. They are stealing from him.

The whole fantastic, irrational process of publishing under capitalism can never be made explicable, and it can be described truly only by showing the distortions engendered by the operation of the profit motive at every point of the publishing process. But before doing so it would be well to keep in mind that a book is supposed to be written to awaken, strengthen and inspire man on his journey through life, and not for the purpose of making money. Nobody in the publishing business keeps this in mind, and many authors forget it as they grow older and the rigors of trying to survive increase.

Most publishers boast that they publish books to make money. They so boast because publishers are such bad business men, which is to say, they are not sufficiently ruthless and rapacious, and when they go to the banks they are sometimes made to realize how relatively ineffectual they are. And so, to escape from this feeling, they swagger, and decide to stop fooling and to make money. And yet 75 percent of all books published do not make money and 40 percent lose money.

Nonetheless, the publisher thinks he is going to make money and he loses all interest in the contents of books. Except for an odd editor or reader, everybody connected with the publishing business soon loses all interest in the contents of the books. Including many writers.

Here is the crux of the publishing business today: publishers think of books only as items in an annual sales total. If a publisher issues a hundred books a year, he estimates, in advance, at the beginning of the year, that, if the worst comes to the worst, and it usually does, those hundred titles will have an average sale of 1000 copies each, or 2000 copies each, or whatever figure his particular kind of guessing produces. It doesn't make any difference to him what the sales on a particular title are. He is interested only in the total. He will naturally advertise and push those titles on which he thinks the sale will be greatest, which almost always means those books which exalt the status quo, and forget completely those titles which show no signs of selling. But he really is not interested in the individual fortune of a book. He is interested in what the wholesale gross on a hundred titles over one year will be. When he calculates what he thinks it will be, he will know, or

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will think that he knows, whether he [illegible] in the red or in the black. If the ca[illegible] wholesale gross falls short of his [illegible] blames the editor and tells him t[illegible]n some more books.

Many publishers are surprising[illegible]ant men and *never* had a personal [illegible]in books. I know some who never [illegible]ook. There are others who once care[illegible]ooks, but the exigencies of the busine[illegible]iem no time to read, and compel [illegible]ink exclusively in terms of sal[illegible]l annual totals. They are so [illegible]siness detail, complicated [illegible]asis of the business is irratic[illegible], have no time to do anything [illegible]telligent planning, and neith[illegible]he inclination to coöperate w[illegible]lishers. A result of this last is [illegible]ion in the same season of two or [illegible]ographies on the same subject, which is [illegible]eful from even the capitalist standpoint.

There is an axiom in the publishing business that some copies of *any* book can be sold —no matter what it contains or how it is written. Anything between covers will contribute something toward the annual sales total. This is the reason why so many bad books, unnecessary books, and books that serve no purpose whatsoever, least of all entertainment, are published. I know of one large publishing house in which the remainder value of a title is carefully computed before a manuscript is accepted. The publisher doesn't believe that he is publishing only to remainder, but he is, and theoretically all publishers are. This is one of the subtler but nonetheless actual facts of the publishing business which no one will admit. Remaindering is frowned on in the publishing business—in good times. The bookstores don't like it. A few of the oldest and wealthiest publishers try not to remainder books. One of the most respectable actually chops them up rather than remainder them. This house is universally praised and its practice of chopping up books is cited as an example of the highest ethics to which a publisher can attain.

Books are sold to the bookstores by men who have also been compelled to lose interest in the contents of books. I am sure that 90 percent of the book salesmen do not read 10 percent of the books they sell. They sell them to the bookstores for reasons which are entirely irrelevant to the subject matter of the books themselves. If a biography by an established author is of a sufficiently large format, sufficiently large, that is, to conform to the bookseller's conception of the size a Christmas gift book should be, it can be sold in large quantities. If it is not of such format, sales will be 25 to 75 percent less.

Mere size, it will be noticed, has been aggrandized into something of value in the book business also. Functionalism is not desirable in the design of a book. Almost all books bulk larger than they need, and are of an overall size in excess of the requirements of the text and illustrations. It doesn't matter that many potential purchasers, living in apartments, are deterred from buying books because they have no room for them.

The bookstores, as is well known, keep 40 percent of the retail price of a book. Naturally the stores are more interested in a three- or a five-dollar book than they are in a one-dollar book. As a matter of fact, the bookstores were the chief opponents of the effort, made a few years ago at the bottom of the depression, to publish new books for a dollar. And they will be the chief opponents of the present laudable effort to publish new books for fifty cents.

Though the bookseller receives four times as much as the author, he is no better off, and all but about one hundred bookstores are bankrupted every three or four years. The reasons, of course, are that people haven't the money to pay the high prices, and that the publishers' salesmen high-pressure the bookseller to buy books unsuited to his clientele—a fact which he never discovers because he hasn't time to learn what his clients want.

In addition to the landlord, banker, telephone company and others, there are eight persons who try to get a profit out of a book, not counting the author. Each takes a profit, and the retail price of the book represents not the cost of producing it, but innumerable visible and invisible profit takings.

It has always struck me as typical of the publisher's parasitism that he really resents the author. He thinks of the author's royalty last, and has no compunction whatever in driving a bargain disadvantageous to the author whenever he can. Even the most reputable publishers. They will all try to secure a certain percentage of the serial rights, of the motion-picture and dramatic rights, or of any other rights, although they are entitled to none of them. When a particular book is doing exceptionally well, so that the original costs of composition and electrotyping have long been wiped off the cost sheet, the publisher takes all the excess profit, and the author gets none. If a book continues to sell for many years, the author receives only the royalty originally stipulated. In the last few years the publishers have been adopting a new method of computing royalties, based not on the retail price but on the wholesale price, the net result of which is that the author bears the expense incurred when a publisher tries to bolster the uneconomic bookseller and grants him higher discounts.

There is always one executive in every publishing house, and usually it is the owner, who says, "Publishing would be a wonderful business if it weren't for the authors." While this is supposed to be a jest, it is a deadly accurate index of the way publishers feel. They have absolutely no conception of what an author is like, or what goes on in his head, of what the creative process actually is, nor of the buffets and outrages which an author receives in capitalist society simply because he is a writer and not a stock gambler. Most publishers wouldn't save an author from peritonitis if the appendix burst in their own offices.

The resulting psychological havoc wrought in the talented writer is so awful that when it is personally encountered one is almost ashamed of being a human being. We all know that very few writers support themselves by what they write. When they are middle-aged they *may* begin to do so. A friend of mine, who made a first-hand investigation, estimated that the average writer of talent makes about $300 a year for the first ten years. The amount of potential creativity in the human race which is wasted is too awful to think about, and many, like Hemingway [NEW MASSES, June 22], deny it altogether and say there are no mute Miltons.

There is an even greater struggle for the writer than the one involved in keeping alive. It is keeping alive the faith that he sees clearly, that he has perceived some truth which it will be good for all men to know, that he has mastered a craft which will enable him to convey that truth. This is a struggle indeed, for among people who do not care, and in a society whose values have no relation to literature's role and function, it is necessarily a lonely struggle, and one that has been so bitter that few have left any record of it, preferring to allow it to be forgotten.

There is a passage in a story called "A Weary Hour," by Thomas Mann, which refers to this. The story is really about Schiller, and the passage runs:

> Once he had been a man capable of taking a strong, confident grip on a thing and giving it triumphant shape. Doubts and struggles? Yes. And ill he had been, perhaps more ill than now; a fugitive, oppressed and hungry, at odds with the world; humanly speaking, a beggar. But young, still young! Each time, however low he had sunk, his resilient spirit had leaped up anew; upon the hour of affliction had followed the feeling of triumphant self-confidence. That came no more, or hardly ever, now. There might be one night of glowing exaltation—when the fires of his genius lighted up an impassioned vision of all that he might do if only they burned on; but it had always to be paid for with a week of enervation and gloom. Faith in the future, his guiding star in times of stress, was dead. Here was the despairing truth: the years of need and nothingness, which he had thought of as the painful testing-time, turned out to have been the rich and fruitful ones; and now that a little happiness had fallen to his lot, now that he had ceased to be an intellectual freebooter and occupied a position of civic dignity, with offices and honors, wife and children—now he was exhausted and worn out.

In the story Schiller recaptures his power, and he finishes the piece of work, just as all of us have done, and all of us will do again. *But the waste—the terrible waste.*

Are we really writers? If we are, we will not be content until we are at the van of life, at the head of the tide of human effort. We will write and work so that this society shall perish and a new and rational one succeed it. We can not, though we would like to, achieve this only by writing, nor by writing and working as individuals. Writers, like all others of the dispossessed, must join together. They must join a trade union in order to survive; a political organization in order to make their efforts to change society effective; and a cultural organization, such as the League of American Writers, in order to learn the relationships between day to day events and the main stream of human effort.

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READERS' FORUM

Marxist philosophy and spiritual man—Political prisoners in Naziland—Attacking a truthful film

● John Strachey's review of *Towards the Christian Revolution* [May 25], and your article and letter by Catholics [June 22] make it evident that sincerely religious persons are now beginning to discover in Marxian philosophy that attunement of their spirit with the forces of reality that they have been robbed of by the church. Like water that seeks its own level, man's natural aspirations must, if frustrated, result in a breaking loose from restraining barriers and a cutting of new channels, wide and strong to hold the expanding stream.

Is it not time that the revolutionary movement of today examined its stand upon certain important aspects of life, chief among which is the religious spirit? Is it not to the men and women who are in the vanguard of the people's struggle intellectually and organizationally that serious people will look in increasing numbers for a redefining of the part that spirit plays in the lives of workers today? The average man who remains a church member has become inert merely through lack of a more energizing outlet for his half-atrophied aspirations. The healthy-minded man who abandons the church turns in disgust to food-faddism and faith-healing, and then to some newer, equally superficial diversion. The sick of soul becomes introspective and grows anti-social, finding no sphere of thought or action that will unite him with his fellows. And meanwhile, all unawares, these men and women stand upon the threshold of a movement from which its adherents derive the very spiritual satisfaction they seek. Men and women in Spain lay down their lives gladly for a cause that they believe vital to the success of the workers' struggle against oppression. Religious-minded men and women find inspiration in such sacrifices. They will not fail to recognize the spiritual significance of Julius Rosenthal's death at Jarama last March. They will be deeply affected by the story of a man who could so cheerfully deprive himself of medical attention as he lay wounded in a field hospital because his younger comrades had a longer span of years in which to fight the fascist menace. They will ask themselves if any other way of life can breed such men, can fill a man's deep spiritual need so completely.

If the church can no longer feed man's spirit, Marxist philosophy must step in and take its full responsibility.

ROSEMARY FROST.

Facing Death in Germany

● I have just received the following cable from the noted German anti-fascist playwright whose *Professor Mamlock* is now playing in New York:

"Help us save lives of Robert Stamm, Reichstag deputy, and Adolf Rembte, editor, condemned to death. Recent execution American citizen Helmut Hirsch indicates appalling danger to the lives of these two men. Do what you can.

"FRIEDRICH WOLF."

Robert Stamm, born in Remscheid in 1900, was one of the leaders of the Communist Party in Bremen until Hitler came to power. After Hitler's nullification of the Communist seats in the Reichstag, Stamm continued working against the Nazi regime underground until his arrest in 1935. He has been kept *incommunicado* since then and was tried secretly only last week.

Adolf Rembte, born in Billstedt, a suburb of Hamburg, in 1902, served several years in prison for strike activity some ten years before Hitler came to power. After his release he edited a Communist newspaper in Germany. Sentenced again to two years in jail in 1930 for his editorial work, he was released in 1932 and worked in the underground Communist movement until his arrest.

I urgently ask that the readers of the NEW MASSES write or telegraph Dr. Dieckhoff, the German ambassador at Washington, insisting that the secret death sentences against these two anti-fascists be annulled. It is not too late to save them!

LEONARD E. MINS.

Tromka

Persecuting "Spain in Flames"

● I happen to have had the opportunity of seeing some of the things that have been happening in connection with the film *Spain in Flames*. It is no longer hot news that Hearst supports Hitler and Mussolini in everything, including the rape of Spain. A Hearst campaign against the film, therefore, should not surprise anyone. The picture, after all, does nothing but tell the truth about Spain today—and this in itself is enough to earn it the enmity of Onkel Wilhelm. However, when the Los Angeles *Examiner* runs an anti-Semitic-please-give-us-a-Hitler-letter directly under a cartoon attacking Red movies—well, one should pay a little more attention.

The cartoon, which appeared in the April 22 issue, was a typical Hearst masterpiece, hairy-legged Bolshevik spider et al. Directly below it, under the caption, "He Hopes for a Hitler," was this letter: "Have you ever noticed that those Jewish folks who are always slandering Hitler are usually also very active workers for Moscow in this country? Americans are beginning to realize that Adolf Hitler is right, despite all the filthy lying propaganda spread against him. Would that we had a great statesman like him in this country.—E. M."

A mere coincidence? Perhaps. But on May 3, the *United Progressive News,* another Los Angeles paper, quoted Thomas B. Flannagan, secretary of the Los Angeles Council of the Knights of Columbus, which is leading the boycott on *Spain in Flames,* as saying: "The Hearst papers have been very kind to us. They are helping us reach the American public. . . . The Knights of Columbus is not concerned with fascism. However, if there ever is a choice between fascism and communism, we would prefer the former. . . . The K. of C. officially is taking no stand in the Spanish civil war. As individuals, however, all of us, including the Catholic Church, sympathize with the rebels. . . ."

Which still wouldn't prove a hell of a lot unless the complete background of this new campaign were exposed. Briefly, then, the picture is this: *Spain in Flames* consists of two parts—the first, a compilation of newsreel clips on the background of the Spanish popular front; the second, uncensored scenes taken in Spain by Soviet cameramen at the front. Its authenticity was never disputed.

The picture played in New York, and was well received. Then, a Hearst stooge in California spilled a few beans. Cardinal Pacelli, he said, had "started something" on his recent visit to this country. (That "something" was the anti-Communist crusade of the Catholic Church in America.) The real Americans, he said, "wouldn't stop at ballots" in their campaign against the "red Roosevelt government and the other red governments." This time Hearst wouldn't stick his neck out; Onkel Wilhelm would merely "report" the activities of the modern crusaders. "We're going to start in on *Spain in Flames,*" he said, "and if we stop this picture, we'll just go right on cleaning up on everything red."

None of the people connected with the picture took this information very seriously, but within a few weeks they learned better. In Pennsylvania, the censors—headed by the widow of Red-baiter A. Mitchell Palmer—banned the picture from the state. Ohio followed suit. It happens that newsreel pictures are not subject to censorship. The censors were stepping beyond their legal bounds in acting on the picture.

Louis McCabe, Irish-Catholic attorney of Philadelphia, appealed to his friend Governor Earle to see the picture and reverse the decision. Earle then made his first speech to the Catholic vote in his 1940 campaign: "This picture is pure communistic propaganda, dressed as a plea for democracy. . . . We Pennsylvanians are not interested in the propaganda of a government largely made up of communists, syndicalists, and anarchists, who butcher priests. . . ."

Earle's campaign speech touched off the waiting Pacelli stink-bombs. The Ohio censors let it be known that they had barred *Spain in Flames* because it was partisan propaganda and irreligious; it shows Madrid burying its dead without benefit of clergy. The picture also shows high priests blessing the fascist troops, but this the censors do not mention.

To date, the Pacelli boys have scored some important victories. Their methods, in contrast to the frank, open mass tactics of labor and progressive groups in fighting vicious films, have been the typical fascist maneuvers of blackmail and threats. In one New York theater, the run of *Spain in Flames* was terminated by a stink bomb on the fourth day. Catholic-fascist pressure groups have threatened theaters with a permanent boycott if they played *Spain in Flames.* The Knights of Columbus, in one case, bought off a theater manager with a goodly assortment of hard liquor.

It is of interest to note that in Seattle, where the film was booked jointly by the Seattle branch of the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy and the Newspaper Guild, the Pacelli-Hearst attempts at stopping the film proved futile. Seattle, it happens, has a strong labor movement—a movement which proved too strong for the Catholics to whip.

The Pacelli-Hearst war on *Spain in Flames* has not been a series of easy victories, however. In Philadelphia, the North American Committee and the National Council on Freedom from Censorship held a private showing for five hundred ministers, teachers, and publicists, including fifty individuals selected by Governor Earle himself. After the showing, the audience indicated its opinion of the banning of the film. The ballots showed only nine in favor of the ban.

In Ohio, both the Cleveland *Press* and the Columbus *Citizen* attacked the censor board for its action. In both Pennsylvania and Ohio, local organizations are fighting the ban in the courts. In Lynn, Mass., the mayor was forced to O.K. *Spain in Flames* despite the K. of C. and the American Legion. It happens that Lynn is a labor stronghold.

The fight revolving around the film just now is a battle that the labor movement cannot afford to concede to Hearst and Pacelli. No one can afford to stay out of this situation. If the fascists fail, it will be a setback for the Spanish interventionists as well as for Hearst—who needs a whipping as thorough as the one he received last November.

MARTHA DONOVAN.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The history of the Paris Commune—Agrarianism in the novel—Child labor and Negro unionists

THE decisive influence of the Paris Commune in shaping revolutionary theory and strategy is well-known to all readers of Marx's *Civil War in France* and Lenin's *State and Revolution*. Equally known is the incomparable heroism of the Paris workers in their attempt to build the first proletarian state. What is less known, especially among the English-speaking public, is the actual history of this attempt. Yet, even apart from the fundamental political lessons of the Commune, few episodes in history deserve a closer study. Its facts surpass its legend. Frank Jellinek's objective work on *The Paris Commune of 1871** is, therefore, a valuable enrichment of our literature.

The main subject of this work is "the mutations of the state-form during this first embryo of proletarian dictatorship." Its aim is "to revive the facts" underlying Marx's "substantially unchallengeable conclusions." This aspect of the Commune is also the most inclusive, and Jellinek's brilliantly written book is more than a mere account of the experiences on which, later, the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat was built; it is also a living picture of the whole period, wherein new light is thrown on many phases of the Commune that hitherto had remained obscure or controversial.

With great clarity, and on the basis of first-hand material, the author establishes the historical background and the political responsibility of the bourgeoisie in provoking the uprising. After Napoleon's downfall, the French ruling classes, represented by the Government of National Defense, had one main purpose: to maintain the imperial social order without the emperor. At the same time they could not justify their existence without pretending that their aim was to win the war. But to continue the war implied encouragement of the social revolution, for there was no possibility of defeating the Prussian invaders without training and arming the workers to whom the fall of the empire naturally meant that France was to be reconstituted. In the face of this dilemma the French bourgeoisie acted in the classical manner: it betrayed the national interests to its class interests. While the people were fooled by promises of victory, the Government of National Defense sabotaged the conduct of the war, did not train the workers' battalions in the National Guard (the Paris militia), and sent them to battle with the express purpose of bleeding them into surrender. At the same time a shrewd propaganda turned the provinces against republican Paris, which was accused of insisting on the continuation of a ruinous war. When the reactionary National Assembly of Bordeaux, headed by Thiers, took the place of the Government of National Defense, the Parisian victims of these treacherous and sordid machinations, were already in a state of exasperation. Thiers then proceeded to follow Bismarck's advice: "Provoke the insurrection while you still have the power, in order that you may crush it for good." With the avowed aim of "bleeding democracy for a generation," Thiers, by a series of acts deliberately calculated to arouse the Parisians, which culminated in the unsuccessful attempt to steal the guns belonging to the National Guard, finally brought about the situation he had desired.

With all his cleverness, Thiers did not quite foresee the consequences of his maneuvering. After the masses had been stirred to action, he stood in real danger of being beaten at his own game. Unfortunately, the central committee of the National Guard failed to follow up their initial success of March 18, and literally allowed victory to slip from their hands. They did not prevent the flight of the government from Paris; they did not march on Versailles while Thiers had no troops to rely upon; instead of "realizing that they were a revolutionary government," they called for the election of a communal council and created a fatal division of power within the besieged city. Efficiency was sacrificed to respectability. The "tragically legal-minded" council checked the revolution at every step; the immense reserves of gold in the Bank of France were left untouched; no decisive measures were taken against bourgeois sabotage; no contact was established with the provinces.

Most of the commentators on the Commune speak of these errors with contempt or indignation, but Frank Jellinek's merit lies in his attempt at a coherent historical explanation.

Sid Gotcliffe

The immediate reason for the Commune's weaknesses was, of course, that "the revolution had been forced upon Paris before the least preparative organization had been conceived." No dominating group could assert itself in the heterogeneous council. The final aim and the revolutionary means remained separated, and even opposed. "Most of those who had some idea of the socialist society at which the revolution should have aimed were forced by the logic of the situation to oppose the only measures which could, for the moment at least, stave off its destruction." Not stupidity, irresolution or corruption, but immaturity and inexperience explain the grave errors of the Communards.

At least the Communards knew how to fight. Begun with the modest aim of establishing an autonomous democratic municipality (this is the meaning of the French term "Commune"), the struggle soon revealed its deeper implications. "Workers, do not be deceived; it is the great struggle: parasitism and labor, exploitation and production are at death-grips," states one of the early proclamations of the Commune. Later, after Thiers's troops, helped by the Germans who then, as today, were supposed to be "neutral," had succeeded in buying their way into Paris, many of the Communards began to understand their historic role more fully. They knew at that time that defeat was certain; but they also knew how much depended on their last stand and they unhesitatingly sacrificed their lives to make future victories possible. With a magnificent contempt for their oppressors, they declared that "Paris has made a pact with death." They fought stubbornly against overwhelming numbers with a "defiant certitude that excluded all passive fatalism."

The bourgeoisie celebrated its triumph with unprecedented savagery. "Quite literally," says Jellinek, "all conception of humanity had vanished." The Communards' humanitarian scruples while in power, their lack of ruthlessness were cruelly punished. When "order" was restored, and a "hysterical 'normality' filled the boulevard cafes with the shrill laughter of relief," thirty thousand men, women and children had been butchered in ten days; and Thiers proudly telegraphed to his prefects: "The ground is paved with their corpses; this terrible spectacle will be a lesson to them."

The real motives for the bourgeoisie's savagery were unwittingly revealed by a member of Thiers's own cabinet when, rejecting some liberals' pleas for mercy to the vanquished, he explained in parliament: "No, gentlemen, it was not a communalist, a municipal movement; it was in its ideals, its ideas and its actions the most radical revolution ever undertaken." The ruling class could not forgive the Communards the mortal wound they in-

*THE PARIS COMMUNE OF 1871, *by Frank Jellinek. Oxford University Press.* $3.

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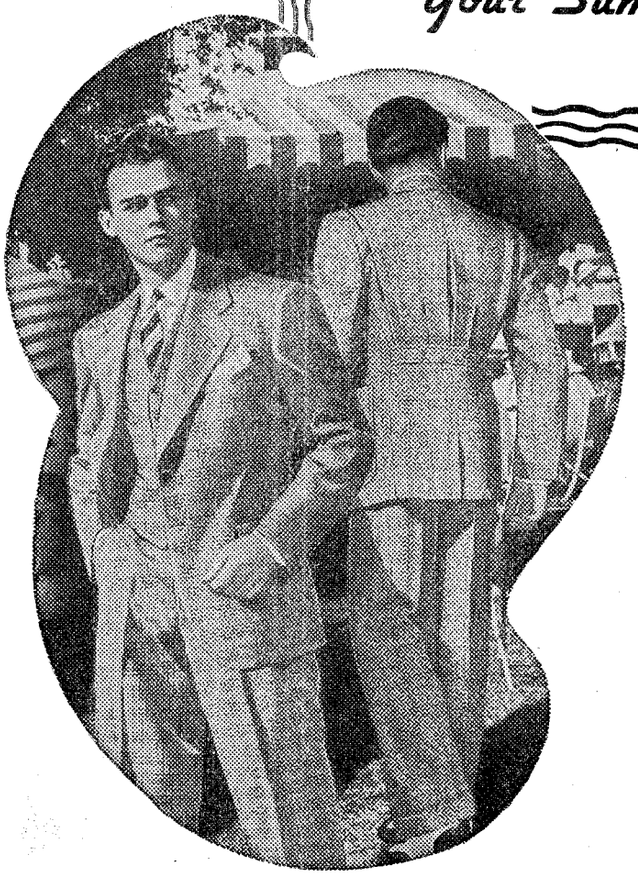

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flicted the bourgeois fetish of the state. The Communards unmasked its inner mechanism and revealed it as a machine for oppressing the majority by the minority; they demonstrated that the source of real legality lay in the initiative of the masses; they replaced the professional army and police by the direct arming of the population; they pointed the way toward an efficient popular control of the bureaucracy. With much groping, at an enormous price in human lives, they discovered the political form "under which the economic emancipation of labor" could be worked out. According to Lenin, the Russian Soviet power was the second step in the historical evolution of the proletarian dictatorship; the first step was the Paris Commune.

NORMAN GOODRICH.

Agrarian Novels

BY DAY AND BY NIGHT, *by Johann Bojer. D. Appleton-Century Co. $2.50.*
THE RING IS CLOSED, *by Knut Hamsun. Coward-McCann. $2.50.*

READING these two novels brings to mind the persuasion voiced by Mr. J. G. Fletcher at the recent Writers' Congress that the southern agrarians were right in maintaining that the machine cannot make for culture. This, in general, is the standpoint of the two Scandinavian writers, Bojer and Hamsun, whose themes revolve about the dilemma of modern urban life that spells, for them, deadly mechanism and hollow pretense. They suggest the revival of the older, simple agrarianism as a kind of therapeutic corrective to our machine civilization. In both novelists, however, there is present the element of "irony," the realization that return to the soil is being irresistibly closed by the iron ring of technics. This realization accounts for the inorganic structure (particularly of Hamsun's novel) and for the irresolute note with which both novels conclude.

Bojer's Leif Sund invented a machine gun that killed thousands in the war and made him a millionaire. The sight of a boy from his home town, whose legs and face were shot away, awakens him to a consciousness of the inhuman ends toward which his technical equipment was directed. Leif seeks solace by returning to his peaceful northern mountains. But commercialism has also invaded his native grounds. The town clamors for another gun invention that would bring prosperity to the community. Leif is driven to work out a new model. But, at the last moment, he experiences a second rebirth; he destroys his plan and announces that he is ready to embrace poverty. However, the ghosts he has called forth will not be banished. The war-psychosis he has engendered rises against himself, taking form in a war of slander directed at him. Leif leaves his home for an unnamed retreat, where he can be completely alone. Thus, the nostalgic yearning for humane adjustment is *socially* frustrated. Bojer is forced to send his hero into absolute isolation, to find peace with the world.

Similar inner reservations with respect to the agrarian directive are present both in the substance and the form of Hamsun's latest novel, *The Ring Is Closed.* The robust, idyllic character of *Pan* and of the *Growth of the Soil* has given way to a halting, rambling pattern. Hamsun is unable to recreate the glamour of the Glahns and the Isaacs. His new nature-character, Abel, cannot find roots anywhere. He is a kind of eternal wanderer. Hamsun strives to set off Abel's deliberate aimlessness and impracticability against the modern ideals of social-climbing on the part of the calculating, profit-seeking town-people. Abel, we are told, has character: "He could do without." Actually, he is a good-natured vagabond, whose economic existence Hamsun is forced to explain by having recourse to miraculous allusions. Abel is cared for at times, like the lilies and the birds, by a benevolent, unknown hand.

Significant for the self-critical element in Hamsun's nature-theme is the fact that Abel's love is not for some home-girl, but for Olga, who represents the evils of modernism—in her home, she is seen "wearing pajamas and smoking a cigarette, her hair cut short, her nails bloody with red lacquer." Likewise, Abel leaves the commercialized town, not for some primeval northern woods (apparently these are not "free" any longer), but for America!

Since *Growth of the Soil* (published in 1917), Hamsun has been expressing his anti-industrialism with increasing impatience, until here it reaches the point of irritability. Despite his continuous treatment of the theme, the question of the socially useful control of both machinery *and* land appears to him still peripherally and confusedly. Thus, when deck hands take over the command of a ship, a disaster is brought about by a brawl among the workers. And Hamsun comments: "Yes, yes, yes, yes! So it goes, when deck hands take over a ship."

To be sure, the themes of the "nature-writers" contain a more basic problem inherent in industrialization. A sense of living depends on physical, individual contact and exertion, on making things one's own. This is not brought about by pushing buttons. Machines must be integrated within the human pattern of self-expression, so that the physical requirement of personal activity may not be lamed by the abstract work of delegated mechanisms.

HARRY SLOCHOWER.

Ceil Rosenberg

Bibliography

BEFORE I FORGET, *by Burton Rascoe. Doubleday, Doran & Co. $3.*

IN 1909-1910, when he was seventeen, Burton Rascoe read Maeterlinck, Jost, Haeckel, Tyndall, Blake, Horace, Whitman, Emerson, Dante, Hadrian, Cicero, Sterner, Schopenhauer, Aristotle, Symons, Hugo, the Mahabharata, the Bhagavad-Gita, Pater, Nietzsche, Virgil, Shaw, Southey, Heine, Wilde, France, Aeschylus, Seneca, Burton, Diogenes, Laertius, Athenaeus, Goethe, Gray, Plato, Norton, the Koran, Schiller, Hearn, Carlyle, Browne, the Upanishads, Lowell, Holmes, Homer, Boswell, Plutarch, Juvenal, Perseus, Boccacio, Vasari, Voltaire, Poe, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, the Bible, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Hesoid, the Greek Anthology, Milton, Kant, Montaigne, Woolman, the Vedic hymns, Tolstoi, Turgenieff, Ames, Hall, James, Jonson, Rabelais, Swift, Coleridge, De Quincey, Bryce, Taine, Cellini, Smollett, de Musset, Stevenson, Thomas a Kempis, Sainte-Beuve, Balzac, Marlowe, Tacitus, Farrar, Renan, Ibsen's *Peter Pan,* Huneker, Mencken, Chesterton, Hazlitt, his high school texts, the *Bookman, Current Opinion,* the *Saturday Evening Post,* and *Collier's.* (The spelling throughout is Mr. Rascoe's.)

The list is not only impressive; it is representative. There are scores and scores of just such lists in *Before I Forget,* so many that I suspect an index was omitted because it would have made the book unduly long. If he tells of taking a course in Latin poetry, Mr. Rascoe specifies that he read Martial, Juvenal and Persius, Propertius and Lucretius. If he happens to mention Harriet Monroe, he lists not only the sub-editors of *Poetry* but also the contributors—"such new spheroids in the poetic heavens as William Butler Yeats, Vachel Lindsay, Sara Teasdale," etc., etc.

For the rest, *Before I Forget* can easily be described. The first part is an honest, amusing, revealing account of the life of an ambitious and precocious boy. The latter part is a jumbled story of newspaper work and literary controversy, sometimes interesting, more often not. Among innumerable anecdotes, usually neither very informative nor very well-told, is one quite inaccurate story about John Reed.

Along with the narrative and the anecdotes and the lists, we are given Mr. Rascoe's reflections on a variety of subjects, reflections expressed in a style that can only be illustrated, not described. For example, Mr. Rascoe writes: "People can get along without

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money in a community of barter or in a community of exchange of services where there is a medium of exchange; but whenever there is an almost immediate and complete cessation of currency in a community used to currency, people are put to desperate means to get it." While the economists are working on that, the critics may try this: "I then regarded dramatic criticism as one of the lowest forms of ambition, a step lower, if anything, than literary criticism if practiced as a form of journalism, requiring words for or against the day-by-day products of the pen and typewriter and not as considerations of such absolute and relative values as you find in Aristotle, Longinus, Liebnitz, Lessing, Hazlitt, Sainte-Beuve, and, occasionally, Shaw, Walkley and George Jean Nathan."

The reader is almost equally surprised by how much Mr. Rascoe had learned before he was seventeen and how little he has learned since.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

Children Under Capitalism

CHILD WORKERS IN AMERICA, *by Katharine DuPre Lumpkin and Dorothy Wolff Douglas. Robert M. McBride & Co.* $3.50.

NEITHER President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University nor President Emeritus A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard should read this book. It would disturb their sleep.

For it is the most complete, the most logical, the most unanswerable argument for elimination of child labor that has ever been presented to the American public. "Definitive" is the word used on the jacket to describe the book, and for once a publisher's blurb is justified. This is the definitive volume on the subject, because it not only brings together all necessary facts on the present extent of child labor, but because it takes up and answers one by one all the arguments of those who, like Butler and Lowell, are opposed to its control.

The authors have richly illustrated their logic with case records from their own original field study of child workers in Massachusetts, Alabama and Pennsylvania. "There is a notion abroad," they state, "that children of fourteen and fifteen no longer work in factories. They are not there by the hundreds of thousands, of course, nor have they ever been. They are there by the tens of thousands, however. . . ."

More than a hundred years have passed, the authors show, since labor organizations first went on record against exploitation of children in the factories of New England. Yet "that body in our society which stands for the social-economic status quo" still comes forward to block the legislation that would end child labor.

Most valuable in the campaign for the federal child labor amendment are the chapters that answer the opponents' claims: child workers are mentally inferior, "some children want to work"; when poverty strikes home; the demand for child labor; opposition to control; and the opponents' case. The authors examine

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the economic and social background of those who would condemn working-class children—but never their own children—to wage slavery. They find that these lobbyists for child labor are of the privileged classes, constituting "the vast bulk of the business class of the country," interested in maintaining the status quo of the business system.

In outlining a program for the curbing of child labor, the authors look hopefully toward an inclusive political party to be created by labor, to include large numbers of wage earners, farmers and the salaried middle classes. They conclude that "a strongly consolidated movement of this kind could launch a legislative campaign to eradicate the crasser forms of child labor with reasonable hope of success."

GRACE HUTCHINS.

Negroes and Unions

THE NEGRO LABOR UNIONIST OF NEW YORK, *by Charles Lionel Franklin. Columbia University Press. $3.75.*

WHAT proportion of the Negro people of New York are—more or less gainfully—employed? In which industries are they mainly found? Are these industries strongly unionized? How many Negro members are there in Manhattan labor unions? Do they meet the obligations and share fully in the benefits of union membership? How did the N.R.A. affect Negro labor?

These are urgent, vitally important questions for every worker and for all who wish to grasp the meaning of current trends within the labor movement. Until recently, however, most of the answers have been lost in a fog of rumor and misunderstanding. In this closely reasoned and carefully documented volume, Dr. Franklin marshals many of the needed facts with great clarity. The story sketched is that of Negro-white relationships in industry from 1827, when Negro slavery was abolished in New York state, to the present day. It ends with a study of Negroes in 224 Manhattan unions, made by the author in 1935—a study growing out of interest aroused during his work on the research staff of the Mayor's commission on conditions in Harlem, following the outburst of protest in March, 1935.

So far as this reviewer is aware, this is the first comprehensive study of the Negro unionist in any city during the post N.R.A. period. Since Manhattan industries include almost every type of union and labor relationship found in the United States, the volume throws considerable light on the general problems of the American labor movement.

It is important to realize that Negroes have been interested in organization to protect their economic interests since 1808; that early efforts to organize them separately failed, owing, in part, to betrayal by corrupt politicians; that the notorious inertia of the A. F. of L. national policy has encouraged white monopoly of jobs in the skilled trades; that Negroes form a greater proportion of all gainfully employed workers but a smaller proportion of organized workers; and that only fifty-

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five of every one hundred employed Negroes were engaged in domestic and personal services in 1930, as compared with seventy in 1910, while increasing numbers are entering manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Of the 224 unions canvassed by the author, 143 had Negro members; and of these unions, 117 reported recent strikes involving Negroes.

Dr. Franklin's analysis of attitudes and practices relating to Negro membership within New York unions reveals a wide range of policy—from exclusion of Negroes, by constitutional provision, in some ten A. F. of L. affiliates, to conscious effort to enroll and activize Negro members. The Food Workers' Industrial Union, Local 110, and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union are cited as outstanding examples of the latter policy. The N.R.A., of course, resulted in changed attitudes all along the line: new recognition by white unionists of the need for all workers to stand together and a new willingness on the part of Negroes to enter the unions. These changes were due in part to a greater sense of security on the job, and in part to the activity of the Negro Labor Committee and Harlem Labor Center following the Negro Labor Conference of July 1935.

The author concludes that "there can be no solidarity of workers . . . if one is considered as a black worker and another as a white worker; all should be regarded merely as workers. The fundamental problems of all workers are the same." This is unfortunately misleading. Is not this volume itself convincing evidence that Negroes face all the problems of labor in general and, in addition, certain problems which do not as directly confront their white fellow-workers? So long as discrimination exists, it must be recognized and opposed by all unions that wish to build a strong, united membership. Moreover, the causes of this division in labor's ranks must be laid bare—the continuous and deliberate efforts by employers to "divide and rule," turning one group of workers against another by appealing to unreal rivalries. If the present admirable study has a weakness, it is here. More space might well have been given to employers' habits, not only in hiring Negroes, but in fomenting hostility among the groups employed.

MARTHA THOMAS.

★

Recently Recommended Books

The Second Five Year Plan, The State Planning Commission. International. $1.75.

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The Road: In Search of America, by Nathan Asch. Norton. $2.75.

Dear Theo, The Autobiography of Vincent Van Gogh, edited by Irving Stone. Houghton Mifflin. $3.75.

Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts, by Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd. Harcourt, Brace. $5.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Hollywood's version of "The Road Back"—Music versus "economy"—Art shows and Paul Green plays

ALMOST a decade ago Universal produced, under the brilliant direction of Lewis Milestone, Erich Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front.* And in 1934 the same company reissued the film with a foreword which said, in part, "It is greater than mere entertainment, because it is a *war against war itself.*"

The new Universal decided to produce Remarque's sequel, *The Road Back,* which tells of a group of boy soldiers, frustrated and maladjusted by the war, returning to revolutionary post-war Germany. Some were shot down by the Reichswehr because they dared to ask for bread. Some saw the road forward, others went insane; still others, like the author himself, remained confused. The book itself is confused and at times confusing. Nevertheless, it is written with honesty and compassion. Remarque's revolutionists are not always authentic, but they are human. Considering the direction of history, *The Road Back* offered tremendous possibilities. Considering the subject matter and the new producers, it offered many obstacles. From the fact that R. C. (*Journey's End*) Sherriff wrote the script (Stallings did *All Quiet*), and that James Whale directed the film, it was obvious that those obstacles would not be overcome. We were assured that it would be an expensive production as well as a pretentious one.

The German consul in Los Angeles threatened the actors, and it was reported that Universal had made twenty-one cuts in order to please the Nazis, which Universal denies. In any event, any film from an anti-Nazi writer would be banned in Germany.

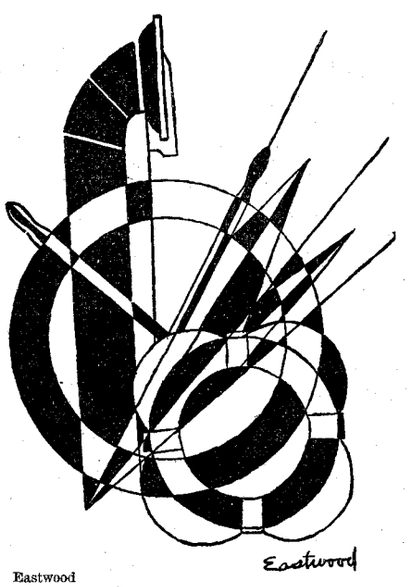
Whatever hopes we had were destroyed upon seeing the film. None of the tremendous possibilities were realized. What should have been the most important American movie of the period turns out to be little more than a routine film with overrated production values. But to say that the film is entirely valueless would be incorrect. It is, to a certain extent, anti-war. There are two or three spots in the film where a character delivers an anti-war speech, or anti-war-profiteer propaganda. The scene in which Larry Blake, playing Weil, is shot down in cold blood by the Reichswehr is the only really good thing in the film. It is the only sequence that achieves any dignity and that is directed with any humanness.

The opening sequences that attempt to convey the futility of the war are stagy, stodgy, and weak. There isn't a single sequence that equals those of *All Quiet,* to say nothing of Pabst's *Comrades of 1918* or Boris Barnet's *The Patriots.* Mr. Sherriff and Mr. Whale have seen fit to break up the monotony of the war with burlesque and bad humor. Or did they intend that the humor should intensify the tragedy and horror? If so, director Whale fails miserably. The second half of the film is worse. The portrait of the revolutionary movement is unclear as it is distorted. It is a wonder that so bad a film should still be able to bear the stamp of anti-war. That it is better than Metro's *They Gave Him a Gun* is entirely to its credit; that it doesn't live up to the tradition of *All Quiet on the Western Front* is to its shame.

The Thirteen (Amkino, at the Cameo, N.Y.C.): Superficially, this can be called a Soviet version of *The Lost Patrol.* In spite of the visual and plot resemblance to the American film, it is very different. There is no question of imperialism here. These Red Army men are fighting enemy bandits on Soviet soil. The portrait one gets of the type of human being that makes up the Red Army is brilliantly executed by the director and actors. This splendid film is the first to reach us from the hand of one of the youngest directors in the Soviet Union: Mikhail Romm. And it is indeed a pleasure to greet Alexei Chistiakov once again, as the geologist (you've seen him in *The End of St. Petersburg, Life Is Beautiful, Deserter,* etc.) and the brilliant actress Helen Kuzmina. This film makes us anxious for more from the hand of Director Romm.

Mountain Music (Paramount): A confused and second-rate variety show against a background of comic-strip "hill-billies." It's about time audiences resented this type of chauvinism. A film about real mountaineers, their folkways, their natural humor would show up this sort of phony "entertainment" for the cheap trash it is. This film was directed by Robert Florey, who has made a longer list of bad films than almost anyone else in the business.

Slave Ship (20th Century-Fox): Darryl F. Zanuck insists on dishing out British imperialism even if he has to do it with an overproduced, over-costly, over-advertised tale of adventure on the high seas (with some sacred love) that never gets out of the pulp-magazine class.



Eastwood

Another Dawn (Warner Bros.): How Hollywood loves British jingo. But even this is secondary. Its main purpose is to provide a fashion show with Kay Francis as the model. There is also Errol Flynn.

PETER ELLIS.

CONCERT MUSIC

THE Washington woodchoppers, with axes nicely whetted, swung into the Federal Theater Project's ambitious production of the Marc Blitzstein operetta, *The Cradle Will Rock,* by banning all W.P.A. theater openings for June—but the old pine tree didn't fall so easily. With some 18,000 tickets already sold for benefit performances that were to preface the official première (and to serve as tuning-up public rehearsals, taking the place of out-of-town try-outs), Orson Welles and John Houseman knew they had something and weren't disposed to call quits. Some quick thinking and acting on the evening of June 16—the first benefit—transferred a sold-out audience from the Maxine Elliott to the Venice Theater (New York). Thanks to Gillmore of the Equity, the emergency performance had to be put on in concert style with the singing and speaking parts done from the floor, but put on it was and the enthusiastic reception spoke well for the plans of producing the show commercially. A lot of first rate talent has gone into *The Cradle Will Rock;* it's had excellent publicity, and if ever a venture deserved to escape sabotage, this is it. It has acquired private sponsorship and is continuing at the Venice, so. . . .

The same lively evening also saw the opening of the new Federal Music Project Brahms Series with the scheduled Handel *Variations, Zigeunerlieder,* clarinet trio, and piano quintet program augmented by a sympathy sit-down demonstrating the audience's reaction to the W.P.A. whittling plans. This series, apparently taking a tip from the popular New Friends of Music Brahms and Beethoven concerts in Town Hall last season, is to run for ten consecutive Wednesday evenings ending August 18, and will cover most of the major Brahms chamber compositions plus some *lieder* and larger piano works. Some of the features are the *Liebesliederwalzer* and piano trio, Op. 8, on June 30; the string quartet, Op. 51, No. 1 and the clarinet quintet on July 7, etc. It's considerably more Brahms than I could take even in ten easy diets, but the New

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Brahms also figures on the first programs of the Stadium concerts (New York) whose twentieth season began on June 23 with Vladimir Golschmann, conducting for the first two weeks. The programs I've seen so far stick to the conventional symphonic repertory, with a condensed concert version of the *Ring* as the operatic feature (July 12, 14, 20, 22), and Harl McDonald's *Rhumba* (June 26) as the nearest approach to an orchestral novelty. But in such an outdoor series one doesn't look for, indeed hardly wants, unfamiliar music. On a pleasant evening and with a halfway decent program the Stadium has its attractions, and if they're by no means entirely musical, they're nonetheless enjoyable.

R. D. DARRELL.

THE FINE ARTS

THE Municipal Art Committee has opened its second annual exhibit at the American Fine Arts Society in New York with a long list of distinguished sponsors. Nevertheless the display containing over five hundred separate items proves to be one of the saddest and most depressing in this art season. If the committee's announcement that this exhibition "reflects both the critical and creative temper of the entire country" were true, then it would be only kindness to purchase a funeral wreath for American art. But only someone totally unfamiliar with art today could jump to the conclusion that the sterility and dullness of the exhibition reflects anything more than official misguided and shallow conceptions of art.

Certainly there are excellent and competent paintings included, both by artists whose names are little known in New York, and by such nationally known artists as Reginald Marsh, Morris Kantor, Leon Kroll, John Carroll, Ernest Fiene, and Alexander Brook, but they are not represented by their best work. There are a few paintings of social content like William Ashby McCloy's *Lost Horizons* or J. Baare Turnbull's *Refugees,* or Rafael D. Palacio's gouaches from Puerto Rico. There are sensitive landscapes like Gus Mager's *Autumn Hills* or straightforward portraits like Durr Freedley's *Mme. Vignot.* But the effect of the sum total is a complete evasion of contemporary reality both as regards craft and content. If the committee is seriously concerned with fostering American art, it should permit the artists themselves to actively participate on the committee and allow each artist to be judged by his peers.

An example of how this might work is furnished by the opening of the second annual competitive exhibition sponsored by the American Artists' Congress at the A.C.A. Gallery. A jury, composed of Stuart Davis, Henry Glintenkamp, Aaron Goddleman, Harry Gottlieb, Chaim Gross, Jerome Klein, Concetta Scarvaglione and Herman Baron has selected fifty-one paintings and fourteen sculptures by younger artists, whose names for the most part

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are unknown to the general public, and who have never had one-man exhibitions.

Here we find young and adventuresome spirits vigorously occupied with the American scene. Here are artists avidly reacting to their environment, resolutely engrossed in solving the problems of their craft. Here are sculptors determined to escape the formalities of official sculpture, acutely sensitive to the materials they work with. As in the last exhibition of the American Artists' Congress, there is a confusion of styles with the emphasis on expressionist means, itself a sign of revolt against the rut of official painting.

Of the post-impressionists, Van Gogh alone seems to exert an influence, seen in Bender Mark's *Restaurant* and Helen Ludwig's *Fishermen*. Of the Mexicans, Orozco's influence has superseded Rivera's, as in Mervin Jules's fine canvas, *Rights*. The type of rural landscape dealing with economic disintegration and catastrophes like the drought has several partisans, for instance Morris Neuwirth's large mourning woman, Harry Kallem's *Middle West*, and Campanella's *Used to Be*.

It is evident that this younger generation of American painters looks less to European models than to its American contemporaries. Juanita Rise's *Waterfront* is close to Stuart Davis, while Laurence Steinfeld and M. Beck chose the highly selective method of Gropper. Elizabeth Terrell uses water color with distinction. Lyn David has a fine lithograph called *Nocturnal Impression*, while W. R. Walkley's gouache of Brooklyn is finely rendered. Space prevents the mention of others equally interesting. One thing is certain—these artists face the world squarely, and while they do not flinch from unpleasant themes, their attitude is not passive or pessimistic. It will be nip and tuck for the committee to choose a winner. Among the sculptors, Milton Hebald's sympathetic treatment of workers merits consideration.

CHARMION VON WIEGAND.

THE THEATER

AMONG the hundreds of plays being produced by the federal W.P.A. theaters throughout the country, the two by Paul Green which are being given in New York are close to the top in excellence. *Hymn to the Rising Sun* and *Unto Such Glory* can be seen on the same bill Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings through June, at least, at the Adelphi Theatre, which is large enough to be comparatively airy even on a hot summer night.

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soff, along with Mary Bell as the wavering farm wife and Edward Segal as the clever but almost cuckolded husband, both of whom reveal again what a mine of talent the W.P.A. theater has unearthed.

Hymn to the Rising Sun (not to be confused with Caldwell's *Kneel to the Rising Sun*) is a bitter, moving one-acter placed in a southern chain-gang convict camp. It is a remarkable theatrical achievement in that, while almost a monologue on the part of the "captain" in charge of the camp, it builds steadily in suspense and dramatic texture. Sketching in briefly his elements of conflict, the playwright turns over the stage to a long speech by the captain to the convicts. This speech is a brilliantly written compound of character development, social history and comment, and dramatic menace, charged with the full poetry of southern speech. It is carried off magnificently by Louis Polan, whose delivery is a blend of artificial warmth, cynical humor, and the deadly fascination of a snake's eye. As he easily coils and uncoils his stream of words before the terror-struck chain-gang, one is reminded irresistibly of the dance of death of Kipling's great python, Kaa, before the fear-paralyzed Banderlog on the terraces of Cold Lairs. It is a memorable *tour de force* in which the playwright, director Arun Foxman, and Mr. Polan all come off with signal honors.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

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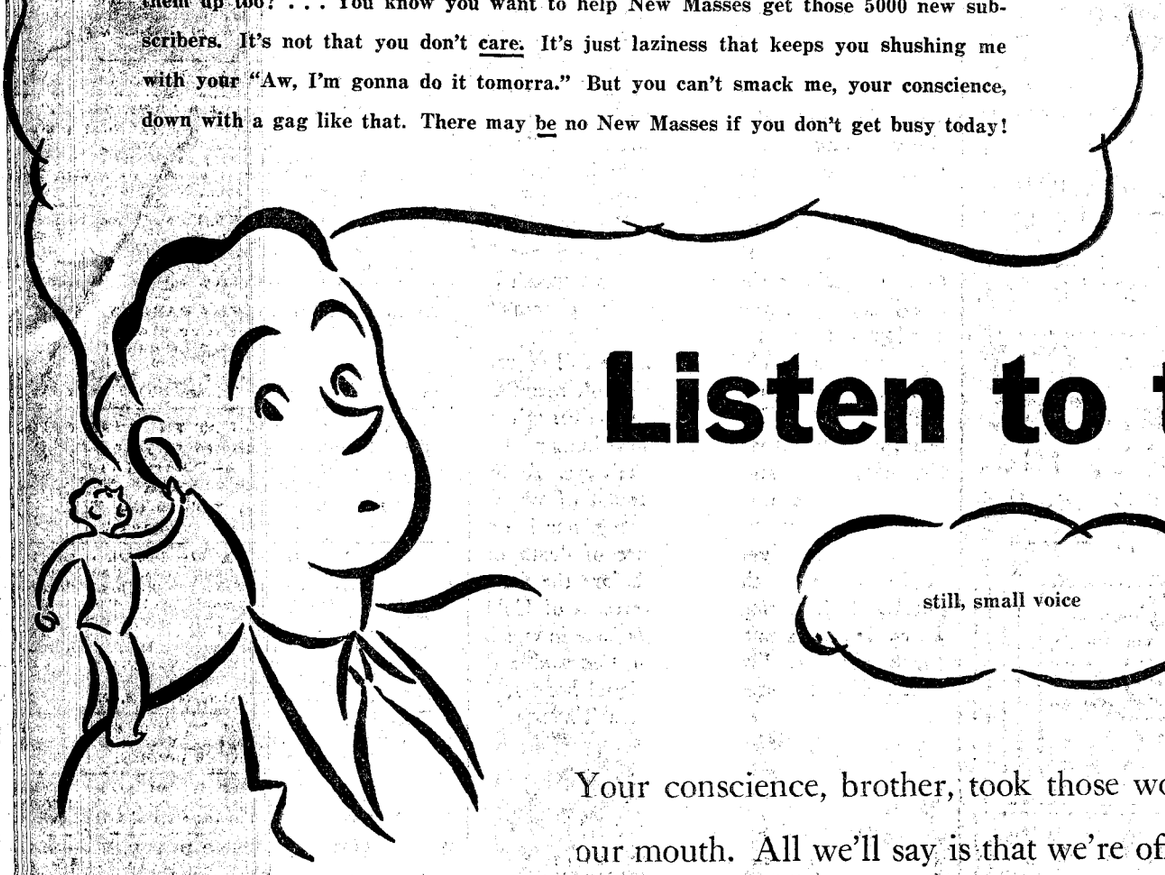

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